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REFLECTIONS ON THE FRENCH UPHEAVAL

THE EDITORS

THE EUROPEAN STUDENT MOVEMENTS

JOHN AND BARBARA EHRENREICH

The Culture of Imperialism

IRWIN SILBER

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NOTES FROM THE EDITORS

The annual Monthly Review Associates appeal letter should reach United States subscribers at about the same time as this issue of the magazine. As most of you know, the money raised through Associates membership fees ($20 minimum this year) covers the magazine's annual deficit and thus makes continued publication possible. But as many of you also know, what you pay to join the Associates is not only a life-saver for MR but also a bargain for you—provided you are a book buyer. To make this as concrete as possible, let us take the case of a subscriber who intends to buy the five new books which MR Press will have ready for distribution in the period between the time when you receive this issue and the end of November. These books are:

Author and Title	Price
Ernest Mandel, *Marxist Economic Theory* (2 vols.)	$15.00
Charles Bettelheim, *India Independent*	11.50

(Continued on inside back cover)

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REFLECTIONS ON THE FRENCH UPHEAVAL

The contention of the French Communist Party and its sympathizers abroad that no revolutionary situation existed in France in May reminds us of the story of the boy who shot his father and mother and then pleaded with the judge for mercy on the ground that he was an orphan.

Of course analogies should not be pushed too far: the existence of a revolutionary situation can be *proved* only if a successful revolution takes place. One must therefore admit the possibility that no revolutionary situation existed. But one must also admit that the CP did everything in its power to prevent one from developing. And since it was by far the largest and best organized force on the Left, one must raise the question whether, if its policy had been different, the outcome might not also have been different.

Apologists for the CP claim that the only alternative to the course it actually followed was to lead an insurrection which, they say, had no chance of success. The clearest expression of this view we have come across is in a letter by one Ken Geering in the July 5th issue of the London *New Statesman*:

> Over the past few weeks, gratuitous, venomous, and hysterical "advice" have been offered to the French Communists and Left Federation. . . . They grew shriller as it became clear that the CP was avoiding the Indonesia-type street massacre being prepared for it by the Gaullists—aided consciously or unconsciously by a couple of dozen phantom ultra-left (de facto, right) splinter groups. . . .
>
> The national elections have shown how unready the mass of the French people were to fight a revolution. The votes did not go to the Left but to the Right. The ultra-leftists have achieved what de Gaulle himself could not achieve in ten years—the unity of the Right (including the fascists) and the disarray of the Left, which had been painfully and slowly uniting. . . .
>
> Why did the wonderful promise of May recede? Because the Communists and the Mitterandists did not launch a hopeless civil war? No! Because the forces of *unity,* of realistic action were

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overwhelmed by euphoria or panic-violence, because the invaluable "trigger" role of the students was—by being overplayed—turned into a unite-the-middle-class-in-fear-behind-de Gaulle role, because inexperienced leftists played into the hands of de Gaulle and Fascism. . . .

But was the only alternative really to "launch a hopeless civil war"—or any kind of civil war, for that matter? Let us see.

We know what line the CP (and the CGT which it controls) actually followed. They did their best to keep the students and workers apart; they tried to get the workers out of the factories; they treated the near-general strike as though only pork-chop issues were involved; and they confined their positive proposals and actions to the level of parliamentary and electoral maneuvering. Elementary common sense tells us that the alternative to this line was not insurrection but one of fostering the unity of students and workers; encouraging the workers to intensify their occupation of the factories and to produce under their own management, goods for distribution according to need; politicizing the struggle in every possible way, including the formation of alliances with farmers and petty bourgeois under worker-student leadership; and the nation-wide establishment of Action Committees (some of which were formed locally even without CP participation) to broaden and deepen the struggle and to assure the continuity and security of social existence.

Would such a line have evoked a popular response? Unless the reports coming out of France in the crucial weeks of May were totally misleading, it seems to us that there can be no doubt that it would have. The mood was one of relief, euphoria, expectation. The Gaullist regime was thoroughly discredited both for its record and for its brutal use of the security police against the students, so that even the regime's warmest sympathizers admitted that its existence hung by a thread (the metaphor recurred again and again). If the most important opposition party, instead of throwing cold water on the upheaval, had boldly assumed its leadership and rallied the masses around an action program designed to show the way out of the impasse and to open the door to a better future, would the

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result have been to strengthen the Gaullist regime or to undermine still further and perhaps definitively its already precarious position? To us at any rate, the answer seems perfectly obvious.

But, it will be said (and quite correctly), this would not have been a stable situation. By all the laws and verities of bourgeois society, the occupation and operation of factories by workers are abominations not to be tolerated, as indeed is the assumption of any public functions by anyone other than the constituted authorities. On the other side, while workers and farmers could keep the economy going quite successfully for a while (at least until existing inventories were exhausted), they could not do so indefinitely without real power to plan and, perhaps even more important, to control the country's *international* economic relations. Sooner or later, therefore, a showdown would have been inevitable. Either the power of the old regime would be restored or power would pass into the hands of a workers' state: either counter-revolution or revolution would triumph.

All this is true and, from a Marxist point of view, even quite elementary. But surely the fact that a given course of action leads to a showdown with the capitalist state is not a sufficient reason for a revolutionary party's refusing to enter upon it. The question to ask is whether there is a good chance of winning in the showdown, and this is not answered by glib phrases about street massacres or hopeless civil wars, still much less by the outcome of a bourgeois election held weeks later when the situation had totally changed. What is required is a careful analysis and assessment of the relation of forces, from which alone appropriate conclusions can be drawn as to whether the time is or is not ripe for decisive action. (In this respect, the way Lenin acted in 1917 is quite rightly regarded as a model worthy of the most careful study and emulation.)

We do not pretend to have made such an analysis and assessment, nor have we seen anything of the sort in the literature from France to which we have had access (only a small part of a very large total, to be sure). We can therefore do no more than pose questions and draw certain very tentative conclusions.

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A showdown between antagonistic class forces is always settled by armed force. This does not mean that there must always be open fighting: one side may be, or appear to be, so much stronger than the other that the weaker capitulates without a fight. The point is that what is decisive at the crucial moment is armed force and not popularity or public opinion or anything else. This was perfectly clear to de Gaulle when, anticipating a possible showdown, he went first to Germany to assure himself of the support of the army high command before making the speech of May 30th which, in retrospect, we can see was the turning point of the crisis. Does the fact that de Gaulle had the support of the army high command mean that he would inevitably have won if there had actually been a showdown?

Not necessarily. If the Left, under bold Communist leadership, had from the outset—i.e. from the beginning of the general strike—entered upon a course leading to a showdown, it would of course have had to make the necessary preparations. This would have meant first of all forming, arming, and training worker-student militias. The necessary men (and women) were certainly there, but how about arms? Presumably some are still left over from the *maquis,* and more could be obtained from arms factories occupied by workers. But of course only someone on the spot and well informed by a nation-wide intelligence network could answer the arms question. Secondly, if de Gaulle could assure himself of the support of the top brass, the Left could attempt to do the same among the conscripted rank and file who of course come largely from the lower classes. And if not much could be done about this as long as the soldiers were in their camps and barracks, a great deal might have been done if they had been ordered to shoot their class brothers in conditions of general revolutionary ferment. Here again, however, no one removed from the scene can hope to make an accurate judgment. Finally, we should note that there were some indications that the ordinary police—as distinct from the security police (CRS) and the mobile guards—were wavering in their support of the regime, so that if it had come to a showdown many of them might have been neutral or even gone over to the workers' side.

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Of course no one can tell what forms an armed struggle might have taken—for example, who would have attacked whom and where—or what advantages the workers might have been able to derive from their control of such important services as electricity, railroads, civil aviation, and telephones. In general, about all one can say is that on the available evidence the Left, *if it had had audacious and imaginative leadership*, would indeed have had a good chance of coming out on top.

Here we meet a final argument which was probably not often spoken out loud but which we can be sure was in the minds of many opponents of the Gaullist regime. Suppose we do invite a showdown—the argument runs—and suppose we succeed in overthrowing de Gaulle and installing a revolutionary government. Won't the French bourgeoisie appeal, as it has before in its history, for foreign help? And won't it get that help not only from its partners in the Common Market but also from Britain and the United States?

It is a valid argument as far as it goes. Class consciousness and class struggle have always been international, especially on the side of the propertied classes; and it would be absurd to imagine that the big bourgeoisie of Europe and North America would stand idly by and watch France go down the drain. To invite a showdown with the French bourgeoisie would therefore undoubtedly mean running the risk of foreign military intervention.

Should a revolutionary be dismayed or deterred by this prospect? Not at all. On the contrary, he should welcome it as opening up the possibility of a much graver, and perhaps even fatal, crisis for the whole world capitalist-imperialist system. Che's slogan was: "Create two, three, many Vietnams!" Imagine the impact of a Vietnam in the heart of Western Europe! As the article by John and Barbara Ehrenreich in this issue of MR makes clear, a single Vietnam in far-off Southeast Asia was a major factor in the genesis and radicalization of the student movements of Europe and the United States, one of which touched off the French upheaval. What reason is there to doubt that an intervention against a victorious French revolution would have much more far-reaching consequences? France has already shown that what appeared to be a pros-

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perous capitalist society with a strong regime entrenched in power can in fact be extremely vulnerable to even small shocks. Why should we assume that other capitalist societies, some lacking even the semblance of stability and without strong governments, could withstand the cosmic shock of a French revolution and foreign-supported counter-revolution?

If the foregoing analysis is sound, we are obliged to conclude that an historic opportunity of awesome proportions was missed in France in May. There can never be any guarantees of success, of course, but there was a chance of success; and success would have had earth-shaking implications. Why, in these circumstances, did the Communist Party not only not rise to the occasion but actually assume the role of savior of the threatened bourgeois regime?

There are many reasons for this apparent paradox. Some go far back into French history, and some stem from the relationship between the French CP and the Soviet Union. But the reason which we believe should be singled out and stressed is the one which has the most relevance to the present and future tasks of building a viable revolutionary movement in the advanced capitalist countries: *no mass party which is organized to work within the framework of bourgeois institutions can also be revolutionary.* If it accepts these institutions and adapts itself to them—even if it thinks it is doing so only provisionally and temporarily—it is bound to acquire vested interests in the existing social order which would be not merely jeopardized but actually wiped out by a genuine revolution. Officeholders in bourgeois parliaments, municipal councils, etc., are trained —by their own experience if in no other way—to handle bourgeois problems; party cadres make a living playing the bourgeois game of electoral politics; trade union officials, delegates, and shop stewards hold their jobs and are rated successful to the extent that they help workers gain concessions from capitalists. In every city and town a mass party of this kind spawns a collection of bureaucrats, petty officials, and functionaries whose livelihood and security are as much bound up with the existing social order as are those of their opposite numbers

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in bourgeois political parties, trade associations, chambers of commerce, etc. And it is these people, full-time party workers, rather than unpaid working-class militants who set the tone of inner-party life and provide the support for the upper-level party bureaucrats who themselves live like, and sooner or later come to think like, bourgeois functionaries in a score of other bureaucracies.

Such a party—regardless of whether it calls itself Communist, Socialist, Labor, or whatever—is by its very nature nonrevolutionary and reformist. This does not mean that it is against the workers or that it fails to represent their interests. It does represent their interests, *within the framework of the capitalist system*. In this connection, Mervyn Jones, writing in a recent (July 19) issue of the *New Statesman,* recounts an anecdote which sums up the situation very nicely:

> More than 20 years ago a communist of undoubted revolutionary credentials (then ageing, now dead) said to me: "Don't make the mistake of thinking that Labour Party leaders aren't interested in the class struggle. On the contrary; waging the class struggle—now gaining ground, now losing it—is what they live for. The only thing they never think of is bringing it to a conclusion."

Sooner or later, moreover, nonrevolutionary practice breeds nonrevolutionary ideology. The classic illustration of this was the evolution of the German Social Democratic Party (and of its leading theorist Karl Kautsky) from orthodox revolutionary Marxism in the 1870's and 1880's to the most pallid reformist gradualism in the 1920's (since the Second World War the German Party has dropped even the pretense of Marxism). And the same evolution in a different form can be observed in all of the Moscow-oriented Communist Parties, including the French, in the half century since the founding of the Third International: Lenin's *State and Revolution* which used to be the hard core of Communist theory has been replaced by the utterly un-Marxist and un-Leninist theory of peaceful coexistence, peaceful competition of systems, and peaceful transition from capitalism to socialism. This new theory suits the needs of the bureaucrats and managers who govern the Soviet

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Union, but it is important to recognize that it is also a perfect rationalization for the nonrevolutionary practice of such mass Communist Parties as those of France and Italy.

Two conclusions seem to us to follow: First, it is no good accusing a party like the French CP of "betraying" the revolution. You can only betray what you have some attachment to; and it should now be clear, if it wasn't before, that the French CP has no more attachment to revolution than does the British Labor Party. And because its nonrevolutionary character stems from its structure and function, it is vain to expect that a revolt within the party bringing to the top a new leadership would change matters in any important way. Second, it is also no good hoping to develop a brand-new revolutionary party on the model of the CP, as many of the Trotskyists seem intent on doing. They imagine that if they could build up a mass party like the CP, they would be able to steer it in a revolutionary rather than a reformist direction. The cause of past failures is seen as rooted in a bad leadership rather than in an inappropiate conception of the party's tasks and the means to achieve them.

As the Ehrenreichs' article below makes clear, the critique of orthodox Communism developed by what may be called the New Left elements in the European student movements—especially the March 22nd Movement in France and the Socialist German Students' League (SDS) in Germany—is not based on a betrayal or bad leadership theory. These groups see the trouble as coming from the basic Leninist conception of the party: the hierarchically organized, highly disciplined vanguard claiming for itself a monopoly of revolutionary leadership. No one seems to have a very clear idea of what to put in the place of this conception, but the general tenor of New Left thinking seems to be reliably reflected in the following statement by Daniel Cohn-Bendit, one of the founders of the March 22nd Movement:

> It is necessary to abandon the theory of the "leading avant-garde" to adopt another—much more simple, much more decent and honest—of the active minority which plays the role of the permanent fermenting agent, encouraging action without claim-

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ing to lead. . . . In certain objective situations—with the help of an active minority—spontaneity finds its place in social movement. It is spontaneity that permits the thrust forward and not the slogans and directives of a leading group. (Interview with Sartre, reprinted in part in the *Guardian,* June 29, 1968.)

The idea here seems to be that the "active minority" should be organized loosely and probably preferably in a number of groups and should exercise its influence on the masses through action and example rather than through attempting to organize and educate them.

It is easy to see how this kind of thinking developed in reaction to the rigid dogmatism and authoritarian pretensions of the traditional Communist Parties with their dismal no-win record stretching back (in the advanced capitalist countries) over half a century. What is impossible to see is how reliance on an active minority plus spontaneity could ever produce a successful revolution.

The problem here is not that the active minority would necessarily, or even probably, develop fatal vested interests in the existing society. In this respect, indeed, one can say that the New Left type of theory avoids the trap into which all the mass parties in the advanced capitalist countries have fallen. The problem is that a revolution is a war against a class which has a tremendous amount of experience behind it, disposes over massive armed force, and has an institutional apparatus capable of planning and conducting a coordinated struggle on a nation-wide (and if necessary international) basis. Against such a foe, spontaneous uprisings triggered by active minorities have almost no chance of winning more than minor, and most likely transitory, concessions. What is needed when the showdown comes is not only mass action to occupy factories and other places of work—the French experience shows that this can come about spontaneously—but the ability to size up the capabilities and intentions of the class enemy and to plan and carry through a successful war against him on both strategic and tactical levels. It must never be forgotten that the goal of a serious revolutionary movement is power, and this means the elimination of the armed forces of one class and the substitution of a monopoly

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of armed force by another class. To imagine that this can be accomplished without strong centralized leadership, without authority, without discipline, is to fly in the face of all the lessons of history.

The Leninist conception of the party was derived precisely from a profound understanding of the problems of class and power. But the experience of the advanced capitalist countries, especially of France and Italy, shows that a party organized on Leninist lines can be, as it were, taken over by bourgeois society and transformed into a purely reformist force. It retains the forms—strict centralization, claim to exclusive leadership of the working class, etc.—but loses the revolutionary content which was the original *raison d'être* of these forms. The result is not really a Leninist party at all but a degenerate caricature of one.

The question, then, which arises in the aftermath of the French upheaval is: What would a real Leninist party—one that has both the *ability* and the *will* to lead a revolution—look like in an advanced capitalist country?

Having the ability implies an intimate relationship with the masses—political and moral authority on the one side, trust and confidence on the other. Having the will means resolutely resisting the temptation to adapt to work within the framework of the existing society: the party must be absolutely clear that its function is not to live off the class struggle but to wage it to a triumphant conclusion.

How can these requirements be reconciled in a single organization? This is the question which should now be debated by revolutionaries in all the advanced capitalist countries.

Not knowing—or pretending to know—the answer, we will content ourselves here with pointing out what may be a useful clue. We know that the Bolshevik Party was never "captured" by the society in which it worked; it was born a revolutionary party and, if anything, it became more so in the two decades before 1917. Why? Because of the backward condition of Russian capitalism? That may have been a factor, but we do not think it is a sufficient explanation. After all, the Bolsheviks were concentrated in the larger cities, and there capitalism was

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quite well developed even by Central and Western European standards. But specifically political conditions existed in Russia which were different from those in most of Europe and North America: Russia was an autocracy, not a bourgeois democracy; there were therefore no legal institutions like parliament, municipal councils, trade unions, etc., through which the party could work for the interests of the proletariat within the framework of the existing system. The temptation to adapt to the system, and hence to be taken over by it, was thus minimal. Tsarism's efforts to change this were feeble and abortive: revolution remained the precondition to any sort of progress.

This analysis suggests two things: (1) It is extremely difficult, and may even be impossible, for a genuinely revolutionary party with roots in the masses to flourish if the institutions of bourgeois democracy are functioning more or less as they are intended to. (2) As the general crisis of capitalism-imperialism deepens, the ruling classes of the advanced capitalist countries may find that they can no longer afford bourgeois democracy and may feel obliged to move toward increasingly repressive regimes. If so, parties representing the interests of the workers would perforce become more and more illegal and less and less likely to be absorbed into the existing social order. If this is indeed the trend of things, then the time to take it into account in planning the revolutionary movements of the future is surely now.

Some observers have hailed the near-general strike of French workers in May as proving that the industrial proletariat of the advanced capitalist countries is a revolutionary agent just as Marx predicted it would be in all his writings from the earliest to the latest. Those (including ourselves) who have expressed doubts on this score—arguing that modern technology has created an increasingly heterogeneous working class and relegated the blue-collar industrial workers to a shrinking minority status in the most advanced countries—have, according to this argument, been shown to be wrong.

This is evidently an extremely important subject not to be dismissed in a few lines at the end of a piece focusing on an-

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other aspect of the recent French events. But since we do not want to be thought anxious to avoid the issue, a few remarks may be in order, along with a promise to return to the subject later on.

In the first place, we are frank to admit that we were as surprised as we were delighted by the explosion of the French workers. And we wish we could accept it as proof that the industrial proletariat is after all going to be the grave-digger of capitalism. But do we really know enough about what happened in France or how typical France is of the advanced capitalist countries in general to draw such a far-reaching conclusion? Consider the following observations by Mervyn Jones who was in France in May and whose article in the *New Statesman* of July 19 we have already quoted:

> In France this May there were 10 million strikers. A demographer would be needed to work out how many were working-class in the accepted sense [presumably meaning blue-collar industrial workers], but the figure certainly wasn't 10 million. What struck the observer was the spread of the strike among office workers, technicians, and professional people. The museums and the Opera were occupied, so were the nuclear laboratories, so were the banks and insurance offices. The strike of the TV and radio staff against official propaganda was the most determined of all, and was enormously popular with the proletariat, or should I say the viewers? All this was utterly different from the British general strike of 1926, when the average bank clerk drove a strike-breaking lorry and the solidarity of the workers was matched by the cold hostility—barring a few intellectuals—of the middle classes. Indeed, the revolutionary stance of the French students, whose selection is more class-biased than in this country [Britain], is in itself astonishing. It seems, in fact, that as the working class gets smaller, it gets bigger. All these computer-programmers and soil analysts and others of undefined class status tend to identify themselves with the workers and to drag others with them. In France, anyway.

Naturally this raises a lot more questions than it answers. What would be the findings of that "demographer" (is it really a demographer who is needed to do the job?) Jones speaks about? What was the incidence of the strike in different regions of the country? Which groups among the workers (defining

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the word in the broad sense of all those below the managerial level who work for wages or salaries) took the initiative in the sit-ins and which held back or went along reluctantly? What did the various groups really want? What effect did the experience have on them? And so on almost *ad infinitum*.

When we have the answers to some of these questions, we will be in a better position to draw conclusions and make comparisons with other countries.

In the meantime, let us suggest a hypothesis to be tested: The French May shows that the "old" working class has more revolutionary potential than the "pessimists" among us believed, and that the "new" working class has a much greater revolutionary potential than even the most "optimistic" among us dared to hope. But let us not allow our wishes to dictate what our analysis will show.

(August 5, 1968)

All this only proves that the bourgeois of our day considers himself the legitimate successor of the baron of old who thought every weapon in his own hand fair against the plebeian, while in the hands of the plebeian a weapon of any kind constituted in itself a crime.

—Karl Marx, The Civil War in France

The moral basis of military training and its ethical standards must revolve about murder and destruction and can never normally grasp social uplift and human progress. For this reason all civilizations of the past have sedulously avoided the rule of soldiers save as a fatal last resort.

—W. E. B. DuBois

This generation has never known a severe economic crisis but it has known something far worse. It is the first generation in American history to experience four wars in twenty-five years: World War II, the Cold War, the Korean War and the war in Vietnam.

It is the generation of wars and it shows the scars in widespread drug consumption, alienation, and the feverish pursuit of sensual pleasures. Yet, we cannot call this generation of the young the lost generation. We are the lost generation, because it is we who fail to give them the peaceful society they were promised as the American Heritage.

—Dr. Martin Luther King

Crime is contagious. If the government becomes a law-breaker, it breeds contempt for law.

—Justice Brandeis, Olmstead v. U.S., 277 U.S. 438 (1928)

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THE EUROPEAN STUDENT MOVEMENTS

BY JOHN AND BARBARA EHRENREICH

We spent most of June traveling around Europe talking to students. We went because Columbia and France convinced us that something was happening and because we were sick of our own peaceful graduate school. Mostly, we wanted to try to find out why what happened, happened now. (If you know how these things work, maybe you can get them to happen more often.)

A little preliminary introspection provided us with a General Theory of Student Movements, which we were prepared to modify to account for national differences, of course. Well, the General Theory didn't survive a single border crossing. *The* Student Movement it was to describe turns out to be largely the creation of a nervous bourgeois press. There are, however, *several* truly mass student movements, in France, Italy, and Germany. (We were also in England; we didn't have time or money for Spain and Eastern Europe.) They have a lot in common: anti-imperialism, anti-authoritarianism, anti-reformism, and a strenuous adherence to direct action in the face of vicious police repression. All the movements were engendered by a similar mix of Vietnam plus undemocratic universities plus general uneasiness about the function of universities, democratic or not. Not only do the proportions of these elements vary, but to a certain extent the elements themselves vary from country to country. The variations are fascinating and have a lot to say about the forms that capitalism has taken in different settings and the ways it adjusts to internal contradictions. But our purpose was not to make a scholarly study of economic adjustments and sociological maladjustments — real scholars will be paid

This is a preliminary report on field work undertaken by the authors in preparation for writing a book to be published by MR Press on the student movements of the advanced capitalist countries. John and Barbara Ehrenreich are graduate students in biology at Rockefeller University.

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to do that. We wanted to import whatever European movement ideas looked useful to us. But it became clear to us that if ideas, tactics, strategies, etc., are something more than fads, they cannot be transferred at random from country to country. This is all the more true if most people's only notion of the foreign idea comes from reading their local newspaper. International exchange of tactics and analyses will be valuable insofar as we understand the setting in which they were developed and the context in which they were applied. We hope the preliminary impressions which follow, sketchy though they are, will help.

Germany

By 1965-1966 the postwar period of rapid economic growth in Germany was over, and the country was about to enter a substantial recession. Concerned by the slowdown, German industry began intense efforts to rationalize itself, efforts which extended to all the institutions of society. In government, the Grand Coalition between the Christian Democrats and the Social Democrats led to the decline of parliament and the strengthening of the role of the executive. New laws such as the "emergency laws" gave the government wide powers, including the right to ban strikes, in the event of an emergency. And, of course, the government determines what is an emergency. These attempts at rationalization played a significant role in the radicalization of the students. For example, the growing power of the executive and the decline in the importance of presumably democratic mechanisms of decision making such as parliament helped disillusion them about the "democratic" nature of the society. The emergency laws, clearly a giant step away from even formal democracy, eventually became the target of a major campaign linking students and workers.

The rationalization effort also extended more directly into the lives of the students. The economy, like advanced economies elsewhere, was increasingly in need of technicians, teachers, economists, and other highly skilled and educated workers. But the universities were hopelessly inadequate to handle the increased load or the increasingly complex tasks required by industry. With the financial squeeze brought about by the down-

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turn, however, the government decided not to embark on any massive campaigns to expand the universities, but rather to make them more efficient — by cutting down on part-time students, raising entrance requirements, etc. These university reforms became a major target of the movement, since they directly illustrated the way the students' interests were subordinated to the needs of Big Business.

These attempts at rationalization of the society occurred at the same time that other conflicts were beginning to unsettle postwar student docility. First, the irrationality of the unreformed university imposed its own strains. The university was traditionally a place for humanist (and elite) education. As enrollment increased, increasing numbers of students were dissatisfied with their education and its lack of relevance to careers. The feudal structure of the university conflicted with its capitalist function. This much the government leaders could try to resolve through rationalization. But at the same time, the university's humanistic themes conflicted with its rationalized purposes. The "irrelevant" content of the students' education always led them to challenge the government's push for an industrially relevant university. Second, these pressures occured as the students' interests were turned more and more toward imperialism. In West Germany, where the Cold War was centered through the years when the present generation of students was in grade school and secondary school, the discrepancy between the democratic facade of capitalism and the brutal fact of imperialism was inescapable. The disillusionment began with Algeria, but it was not until the waning of the Cold War in Europe around 1963, and the outbreak of the Vietnamese war in its current phase in 1964-1965, that it began to send students out into the streets.

It should be emphasized that all of these pressures were greatest and appeared first in Berlin. There the economy began to show signs of total irrationality by 1963. The ideology of anti-Communism and of capitalism-is-democracy was concentrated here as perhaps nowhere else in the world, especially in the years just before and after the building of the wall (1961). Finally, the "Free University of Berlin," which was established

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in 1948 with the help of students, partly as a Cold War weapon, had always given the students a nominal role in decision making, unlike other German universities. So in Berlin, the dissonance between the democracy professed and the reality practiced in both university and society, was greater than elsewhere in Germany. And it was in Berlin that the German student movement in its present form emerges.

From 1961 to 1965, a series of events, ideas, and actions (led chiefly by the German SDS — Sozialistischer Deutscher Studentenbund) began to politicize the students. As important as any single event was the revival of left theoretical work, especially at Frankfurt, where the "Frankfurt school" of critical sociologists — Habermas, Horkheimer, Adorno, and Marcuse among others — found an eager audience. In June, 1966, learning from the American movement, Free University students sat-in while the faculty Senate discussed a proposed university reform. During the following year, demonstrations on Vietnam and on university issues grew in size, always aided in their growth by the brutality of the police and by the campaign of vilification directed at the students by the press (monopolized by Axel Springer in Berlin). The combination of police and press attitudes slowly revealed the real nature of the society in a very personal way for more and more students. This phase of the student movement culminated in the killing of a student during a demonstration against the visit of the Shah of Iran in June, 1967. There followed a desultory winter, during which a campaign against the Springer interests failed to catch fire. Then, just before Easter, 1968, Rudi Dutschke was shot and critically wounded by a Springer reader convinced that Dutschke was "public enemy number one." Students, most of them recently politicized by the preceding months of agitation, reacted en masse. Almost spontaneously they descended on Springer, with the slogan "Expropriate Springer" and the intention of preventing the delivery of Springer papers. In one leap, the movement had changed from being anti-imperialist and concerned with university issues to being openly anti-capitalist, in actions as well as in words. Shortly following this, the

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emergency laws came up for final approval, and the students were again active in opposition, this time making some contacts with workers.

Many student groups (including the national student union), the humanist clubs, and religious leagues participated in the struggle; but SDS was at all times the avant garde. Originally SDS was the youth group of the German Social Democratic Party. Just as American SDS became too radical for its parent, the League for Industrial Democracy, so the German SDS moved steadily toward a split with the SPD. After the break finally occurred in 1961, SDS continued to function entirely as a set of decentralized study groups. These early years saw the intense theoretical work which was to become the basis of much later action. But they were also a time of desperation. One girl told us of those days in Berlin, living in the empty show window of capitalism, surrounded by the grim stretches of East Germany, when they read everything they could find about Third World struggles, believing they could do nothing. "We talked and talked," she said. "We felt like committing suicide." In 1964, desperation culminated in an "existential decision" to act. This was no light decision; some groups split over it. After all, there were no "objective conditions" to inspire hope; and those who acted, did so "without hope, with our backs to the wall." Spurred by the American example of direct action, they began the agitation that led to the 1966 sit-in at the Free University of Berlin.

The decision to act was based on a carefully reasoned strategy. Just as Third World liberation struggles were exposing the violence of imperialism, so, they argued, direct action can expose the innate violence of modern capitalism. Once the true authoritarian nature of society was revealed, people's allegiance to the system would be shattered and they would be open to a discussion of socialist alternatives. SDS could thus make a "short march" through the institutions of society, exposing each one systematically.

The first institution on the path of march was the university. Students were not seen as a source of cadre, but as a constituency (our word) in themselves. By agitation and direct

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action on university issues, the repressive functions of the university would be exposed and a mass student movement would emerge. Now there was nothing reformist about SDS's concentration on student power issues. They believed and still believe that mass politicization must be firmly based on problems experienced directly by that mass. They have no illusions about the possibility of building a "democratic" university in an undemocratic society. Students were politicized so that students could march on to other institutions. Thus they used the university issues as a means of ideologically exposing the university; they were not ends in themselves.

What successes and failures have they had with these techniques? First, with respect to the university, they have been extraordinarily effective. SDS's membership is small — perhaps 3,000 in West Germany, perhaps 500 to 600 in Berlin (out of 25,000 students in Berlin). But the vast majority of the student body at the Free University of Berlin follow SDS's lead. The student government is controlled by SDS and SDS sympathizers. The other liberal and left student groups (such as the present youth group of the Social Democratic Party) have been moved far to the Left. As in no other place we visited, the German SDS has built a mass student movement, capable of sustained radical action.

In the university, SDS has pioneered many original and creative tactics. Perhaps most worthy of note here is the "Critical University." This is not, like the American "free" universities, an institution parallel to the existing university, offering courses you can't get in the regular university. It is embedded in the regular university, and oriented toward the continual challenge of that university as well as toward the challenge of other institutions in society. Thus, students of history study the same history they study in regular classes, but critically, so that they can go into class and effectively expose the ideology implicit in the professor's interpretation. Many Critical courses are directly related to action. For instance, a class may discuss tactics and decide to initiate an action. Or, it may work on substantive problems related to the actions of a community organizing project.

Another pioneer tactic of SDS is the "go-in": a group of

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students enters a classroom and challenges the professor to debate; they enter a meeting of a policy-making body and demand to be included in the discussion; they break up an examination by analyzing it out loud.

SDS tactics of exposure through confrontation worked admirably for students, but have had no effect on the staunchly anti-Communist German adults. In fact, the press has succeeded in parlaying student action into adult reaction — students are perverts, Communist terrorists or, as SDS puts it, surrogate Jews. SDS realizes that the short march stopped short at the edge of the campus, and that they must now take up "the *long* march of youth through the institutions of society" (Dutschke's phrase). As a start, they are experimenting with "basis groups." A group of students goes out into a neighborhood to organize people around an issue such as rents, by leafleting, house meetings, etc. So far they do not seem to realize that relating people's felt needs to SDS's political analysis is a long, frustrating process. In one section of Berlin they worked for two months, then complained that "the women want to talk about rents but not about politics; the men want to talk about politics and not about rents." So they decided that rents were not a good organizing issue and gave up! SDSers were incredulous when we told them that many American organizers consider their project a lifetime commitment.

Another problem is that their theory, as soon as it is removed from the university, is very abstract. In Frankfurt and in Berlin, after the emergency laws campaign, workers came to talk with the students who were occupying the universities. But the students didn't know what to say. They could talk theory of workers movements, but not practice. Thus in their relations with groups other than students, SDS is presently stymied, and is doing some of the kinds of experimenting that American SDS has been doing all through the years.

It seemed to us that SDS's extramural organizing problems are rooted in a psychological inability to break away from the university. Intra-university agitation continues, although no longer justified by base building — the base has already been built. "After all," we were told, "if we have to spend five or six

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years here, we might as well learn something politically useful." No one seemed to question the value of spending the five or six years in the university. No one seemed to consider dropping out to organize full-time. (To be fair we should add that no one seemed to spend much time studying, either; and subsistence-type jobs are probably harder to find than in the United States.) Yet neither theory nor practice seem prepared for the inevitable fact of graduation. Individuals saw no alternatives to their professions, and there is little critical analysis of the professions in SDS theory. The kind of movement subculture which keeps American radicals "in the movement" long after they have no connection with a university has not developed in Germany. SDS faces the task of translating its critical analysis of "all the institutions of society" into a working praxis for individual radicals.

Italy

As in Germany, the movement in Italy grew out of a combination of discontent with the university and concern for the problems of the Third World. The struggles in the Third World initially affected only the already politicized students, giving them a new sense of urgency and a new militant style. From Guevara they learned their lessons — "two, three, many Vietnams" and "the duty of a revolutionary is to make the revolution." The Vietnamese struggle also helped wean them from any lingering attachment to the reformist Italian Communist Party (PCI). While the students were proclaiming solidarity with the NLF, the PCI adhered to the "peace in Vietnam" line.

Meanwhile, the discontent with the university had been smoldering. Economic pressures and boring lectures keep most students away from the university except for exams. This is fortunate, since university facilities could not accommodate the increasing number of enrolled students if they actually showed up. After graduation, students discover that their training is inadequate for most available jobs. Industry tries to compensate with extensive on-the-job training for newly hired graduates. For several years preceding 1967, the national student union had pressured for reforms in the university; but even when its actions

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were militant, it remained a bureaucratic organization, trying to mobilize students by calls from above, without discussion or initiative from the students. Most students were totally apathetic towards the student union and its activities.

In Turin, in November, 1967, militants decided that the time had come to ignore the student union and go directly to the students. A meeting of the faculty over a proposal to build a new campus outside Turin was the occasion. When a petition to this faculty meeting was ignored, the students decided first to disrupt the meeting, and eventually to occupy the university. This first occupation lasted a month, and was followed by further occupations which have kept the university closed for almost the entire winter and spring. The movement spread rapidly. In Florence, in January, demonstrations over university problems were brutally disrupted by the police. A sympathy demonstration in Rome led to the occupation of several faculties of the university there. Throughout the spring, direct action escalated, creating a mass student movement, especially in Turin, Rome, and Pisa. The actions included demonstrations on Vietnam, solidarity demonstrations with the French and the Germans, and demonstrations on local university problems.

The Italian students are careful to justify their struggle in the university in terms of a wider struggle. "What does the university teach?" they ask. "To command and to obey." The university divides the student body into a tiny elite (who will command) and a mass of highly skilled workers (who will obey). For both kinds of students, the university's role is not to teach skills but to instill the authoritarian and hierarchical ideology inherent in capitalism. They say that the university is a "class institution." That is, its primary function is the reproduction of class society. It follows, in their argument, that the struggle for university reforms is itself anti-capitalist as long as these reforms challenge the university's role in recreating the class system. The Italians see the university as only one of the institutions that must be attacked, and even then only in the mechanisms through which it preserves class structure, such as examinations (which channel the student into either the elite or the upper-level working class). True revolutionary change must occur throughout

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the entire society, with the industrial workers playing the leading role, they believe. But, at this stage, students are seen as having the special role of theoreticians and organizers. Within the university, they have the possibility not of creating a new university but only of "demystifying" the old.

As to relations with the workers: the students face a working class organized into reformist parties and unions, despite the verbal class consciousness of these organizations. (Note: the Communists' adoption of Gramsci leads the students to see Gramsci's thought as reformist. In particular, the ideas he developed toward the end of his life seem to lead directly to a strategy of working within the system.) Already worried that student militancy will spill over to the factories, trade union leaders are trying either to use or to isolate the students. The students, on the other hand, insist on mass interaction with the workers themselves, not just on relations with the union leaders. In dealing with workers, they try to attack the authoritarian and bureaucratic union *structure* without threatening the union itself as a protective working class organization. Practical attempts to build relationships with the workers are still primitive, but far from discouraging. In Rome, students are developing contacts with younger workers and with university personnel. The students have little interest in white collar workers or in organizing people where they live.

The style of the Italian movement is anti-authoritarian, but not anarchist. The structure of what they call "the Movement" is loose and geared to action. At various times, various divisions into "commissions" have been made. In Rome there are now commissions on the university, on relations with high school students, and on relations with workers. But decision-making rests entirely in the general assemblies of the movement. All the bureaucratic trappings of existing parties are avoided — leaders, committees, membership. However, as the movement grows, the need grows for an office, a newspaper with some continuity and with power to make its own editorial decisions, etc.; and some loose structure may develop. Despite the anti-authoritarian formal structure, the Italian movement is far from practicing internal participatory democracy. General meetings tend to fea-

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ture series of lengthy speeches, with little or no exchange from the floor. Mechanisms for deepening the politicization of the "mass" of the students who have been awakened by direct action have not been developed, although the need for them is felt.

The cultural elements familiar to the American movement are almost entirely absent (at least in Rome and Turin — Florence and Venice may be exceptions in this respect). There is no youth subculture or hippy movement. The intensity of activity in the spring months has led to much camaraderie, but not to a markedly new life style. People described radicalization as entirely a moral and intellectual process, without using psychological terms like "alienation." Similarly, although they see all institutions of society as relevant to attack (an understanding which they claim derives from the Chinese Cultural Revolution), cultural institutions are, in fact, not on their list. Thus the Provo actions taken by a group of artists at the Venice Biennale were dismissed as trivial by the Romans: artists should work directly for the movement or not at all. The Italian students have done little by way of analysis of the role of culture as a mechanism of social control. Marcuse's influence is more talked about by the bourgeois press than felt by the students. All forms of psychological and sociological repression are summed up as "mystifications." That is, they are neither analyzed nor considered interesting; it is merely assumed that they somehow reflect and hide the class structure of the society.

Finally, direct action is seen less as a mechanism for attaining any particular end than as a mechanism for exposing the latent violence of the society (an idea which they may have picked up from the German SDS, which has been very influential with the Italians). The actual stimulus to direct action was the struggles of black people in the United States and the struggles in the Third World. In Italy as well as in Germany, direct action exposed capitalist violence even more clearly than the students expected, and they are now looking for forms of action which do not guarantee wounds and jail terms.

After the heady days of the spring, the Italian movement is now in a state of retrenchment. Much of its style is still a militant reaction to the reformism and parliamentarism of the

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Communist Party (and to a lesser extent of the Socialist Party of Proletarian Unity — PSIUP). Now they must pass from rejection to development of alternative forms of action. The students needed little practical analysis and little subtlety of strategy for their struggle in the university, and they are little prepared to carry their struggle beyond the university doors. Even within the university, their following has been exhausted by the strenuous spring, and the movement faces the need to consolidate its strength. It may give some perspective on both the French and the Italian movements to guess that in many respects the Italians are now where the French might be had not the workers joined in France.

England

The English student Left is split into three main tendencies, none corresponding fully to what we would call a "New Left" in other countries. None, as yet, has succeeded in mobilizing any substantial student movement.

First there are the pure student power people, typified by the students who occupied Hornsey College of Art in Northern London this spring. The occupation began after a protest over fairly trivial student complaints, but it rapidly escalated into a wholesale attack on the traditional ways of teaching art, on entrance requirements, examinations, the creation of narrow specialists by a rigid curriculum, etc. Radical in its syndicalist critique of the art schools and in its demands for student power, it steered scrupulously clear of "politics" and more or less clear of the organized student Left. The Hornsey students saw these issues as divisive, essentially because — and it took us a while to realize the full implications of this — they believed that they could *win*. The reforms they were asking for seemed to them to be in line with official reform proposals, so why alienate support from outside by tacking on irrelevant issues? Student power demands, direct action tactics, and the endless talk about community (the London papers called it the "talky-talky" revolution) characterize the Hornsey militants. Although the talk drifted constantly towards political analysis, it shied from extensive links to external political programs or issues. Outside of Hornsey, student

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power militancy emerged in numerous other art schools and polytechnic institutes around England this spring.

Second, there is a group which we will call "pure student leftists." This tendency is centered around the International Socialist groups outside the universities and in many of the socialist clubs in the universities. Until relatively recently, these groups were not interested in either student issues or in students as a mass base. Their issues were Vietnam, racism, working class living standards, and the threat of fascism; and their proposed political base was the working class. More recently they have come to see that they could gain adherents by adding student power to their programs, but it still sounds like an afterthought. As far as they are concerned, students are valuable as agents for activating workers; and student issues as such are basically bourgeois. Although these "pure leftists" were leading spirits in the occupation of the London School of Economics last year over student power issues, some of them now feel a little embarrassed over that event — as if they went too far. They have contempt for the occupiers of Hornsey since the Hornsey demands are "non-political." This attitude may reflect their own failure to gain adherents at Hornsey, which, however "non-political," had obvious political possibilities. In style, as well as theory, the pure leftists differ radically from the student power types. They have little interest in "community," and little faith in direct action. Generally they believe that "given the correct line, the correct tactic will follow." This rather limited vision of the interaction between action and consciousness takes the place of characteristic New Left ideas on confrontation.

We believe that this split between the groups involved in politics on non-university issues and the groups involved in pure student syndicalism can be traced to a split in the British educational system. On the one hand, Oxford, Cambridge, and a few other elite institutions such as the London School of Economics, are the repository of the classical, humanistic, liberal arts tradition. These universities produce an elite. On the other hand, the art schools, teachers colleges, and polytechnic institutes produce the mass of technicians, teachers, and other highly educated workers. The latter are divorced from the liberal arts

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tradition, are often very rigid about exams, rules, etc., and have students of a class background somewhat lower than that of the students in the elite schools. The split means that the tensions between the elite liberal arts *values* and the practical training of the non-elite *reality* do not, in England, occur in the same individuals or in the same institutions. The inculcation of skills and the inculcation of values which conflict with those skills are separated. The elite thus comes to feel moral anger at the war in Vietnam, racism, and other things which do not directly affect it. The pre-worker types feel simple self-interest problems, not related to the external problems. The two kinds of movements do not merge.

If this analysis is correct, one might guess that hopes for a New Left movement of the type we are familiar with might lie in the "red brick universities," the new universities designed to bring an American-style university education to great numbers of people. There have, indeed, been stirrings in some of these universities, but so far they have not shown distinctive trends in style. In some the leaders are International Socialists, in others the leaders are quite suspicious of the IS.

Despite their differences the student power and the pure left groupings have many elements in common, in attitude if not in ideas. They each feel that power is diffuse, reflecting their inability to identify power in their society. Thus to the International Socialist groups, the enemy is now "fascism," as if they were searching for a concrete form to give the unknown enemy. To the Hornsey sitters-in, avoiding political analysis, power lay in a diffuse hierarchy of academic and government officials.

Both groups are also similar in their attitudes toward violence. To the American they appear very gentlemanly, in spite of the influence of American direct action tactics. They see little reason to expect violence or to provoke it. As someone at Hornsey told us, "Why, if the government cut off the power to get us out of the building, it would be a national scandal!"

As yet, the notion of organizing in the American sense does not seem to have been grasped. Thus, leafleting plant gates is called "organizing" by the student Left. And the student syndicalists fear a one-man-one-vote system in the university because

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they "might lose." Neither group seems to have any idea of changing the consciousness of someone who has not yet been convinced.

Finally, there is a third tendency on the Left, represented by the *New Left Review* and by the groups around the "New Left May Day Manifesto." These people are the only ideologically recognizable New Left, but are almost negligible as activists. They represent primarily an intellectual trend. They recognize the importance of student syndicalism, but have few links to it; they understand the idea of organizing, but have little experience. This group does have weak links with the Hornsey sit-in and links with a neighborhood organizing project in Notting Hill Gate in London.

It should be noted that each of these groups is involved in efforts directed toward cooperation of different groups. It may be that through one or another of these efforts, a cross-fertilization can occur and a New Left synthesis, in action as well as in theory, can take place.

France

There are two phases of the French student movement: before May and after May. The pre-May movement was a straight student movement, nurtured on Vietnam and university conditions. As was true to a certain extent in Italy, Vietnam played a double role. First, it re-activated left students who had been inactive since the Algerian war. Vietnam provided an outlet for the *groupuscules* — Maoist to anarchist — but did not evoke a mass anti-imperialist movement. In a sense, the left concentration on Vietnam was an evasion of the domestic, *French* issues. But to try to do anything about the latter would have meant immediate reaction from the government on the one side and, as events have shown, from the Communists on the other side. Vietnam, however, was an acceptable, morally compelling issue, and gave the newly emerging activists a chance to practice.

Meanwhile, a crisis was shaping up in the universities. The French university, like those of most European countries, is years behind the times. Overcrowded, totally impersonal, with an out-

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dated curriculum, it was ill equipped to train people for most of the available jobs. Students felt materially oppressed, not just "alienated." At the same time, government and industry were becoming increasingly dissatisfied with the university's failure to produce an adequate supply of trained people. One government approach was to build new universities, such as Nanterre. But the new university reproduced many of the defects of the old and added a few of its own, such as total geographical isolation. Next, the government proposed a reform plan, the *Plan Fouchet,* which, like reform plans in other European countries, attempted to solve basic problems by administrative means. The new efficiency measures included making full-time attendance mandatory and raising barriers against unrestricted admissions. In resisting these "reforms," students rapidly encountered administrative ineptness and police brutality.

At Nanterre escalating agitation produced a radical student movement in essentially only a few months. One reason for the movement's rapid growth is that the French students were not new to radical thought, no matter how new this generation was to action. Every activist we met was some shade of Marxist, however unorthodox, however tinged with anarchism, Reichian psychology, or whatever. Second, the French university is so tightly controlled by the Ministry of Education that the local university administration has hardly any independent power. So the step from struggling with the university administration to struggling with the national government was a natural one. It did not have to be mediated by a slow revelation of the role of the university in society (unlike here in the United States, where it was the complicity of the university in the Cold War and Vietnam which exposed its political role).

The student movement in France developed unusually rapidly, amid an unusual amount of violence. But in comparing it to the movements elsewhere in Europe, there was nothing really extraordinary about it — until May 13. In fact, it developed later than the other major student movements, and, in its university phase, didn't have time to produce any theoretical or organizational tools for "reaching" the workers. From the standpoint of the student movement, what happened in the

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last half of May was an accident.

But it happened: the workers did join in. Recall, in what follows, that throughout the entire period, the vast majority of the working class was only following the lead of the Communist Party and the Communist-led *Confedération Générale du Travail* (CGT). Except for a brief period of solidarity between the Party and the students, there was no worker-student movement, nor is there even yet a workers' movement. Contacts between students and workers occurred; they may be the basis of a future worker-student movement, but they remain merely contacts. Nevertheless, the events of May are the irreversible watershed of the French student movement, shaping everything that happens today.

Up until May, no set of ideas on the nature of advanced capitalism or on the role of the university gained hegemony. No one organization among the many *groupuscules* could claim to be the principal organization of the student Left. The forms and theories of today's movement arose primarily from the contingencies of May.

The most prominent of the "organizations" of the French movement, and the one most student activists are associated with, is the March 22nd Movement (*22 Mars*). This is, in fact, not an organization at all. More or less anyone who is active and who identifies with *22 Mars* is in fact a member. *22 Mars* is the symbolic embodiment of those who are revolutionary activists. It is thus multiple-tendency in ideology and anarchistic in organization. These characteristics fit the *ad hoc* development of the movement from March 22nd to May — *22 Mars* grew by the accretion of new groups as they moved into action. Along with several other organizations, *22 Mars* was ordered dissolved by the government in June. Having no members and no membership cards, this order had little meaning, and *22 Mars* activity continues.

The actual forms of struggle on the local level also emerged in the course of the May events. Most important of these are the *Comités d'Action* (action committees). These are groups ranging from handfuls of people to hundreds of people, engaged in local action. Thus, an occupied faculty would have an action

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committee coordinating its various activities; a group of people organizing in a certain neighborhood of Paris to support the strike (by raising money, putting up posters, selling newspapers, etc.) would constitute another action committee. When we were in Paris, many action committees were working on plans for a summer university for students and workers. The committees were coordinated only very loosely. They would meet to decide on common actions and then each committee would undertake its share, depending on its abilities and its constituency. There was no attempt to enforce ideological unity: unity on tactics, diversity on principle, was the watchword.

It was only in June, when the general strike faltered, that serious discussions were held on post-crisis organization. One section of the movement insisted on creating a new "party," the *Mouvement Révolutionnaire*, but the great majority of the students rejected this attempt to impose organization from above.

There are more ideological tendencies within *22 Mars* (like *Jeunesse Communiste Révolutionnaire*) than we have space to discuss. Fortunately, the mainstream of *22 Mars* is the most interesting and is practically homogeneous. In describing two "poles" of thought in the mainstream, we are creating a distinction that does not exist in reality. These "poles" are not factions; they are part of a continuum. Both are Marxist in analysis, anti-authoritarian in mood, and direct-action in style. One pole might be called anarchist shading into Marxist; the other might be called Marxist shading into anarchist. Both are very lovable.

The first "pole" is, in a very traditional way, anarchist. They are adamantly opposed to organization *per se*. Extolling spontaneity, they tend to be anti-theoretical and even anti-intellectual. ("It doesn't matter what people say, only what they do," one student told us when we asked what books had influenced him.) They condemn analysis or strategy of any kind. "Objective conditions" are what you create through actions. But the action also changes you, hence your perception of "objective" conditions, and so on. Thus organizing, in the American sense, is meaningless, for it assumes a relatively static reality. Rather you simply create situations in which people

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have to make a choice, and the sum of these confrontations is the revolution. If you look dubious, they remind you of May.

In May, direct action and confrontation did prove extraordinarily effective. Because of the speed of the transformation of the movement, from a student movement largely centered around Nanterre to a nearly revolutionary upheaval in a few short weeks, the students never had time to sit around and play the strategy game to the extent that SDSers in the United States are getting used to. The Marxian *groupuscules* which did play it were, with few exceptions, so strident and sectarian that no libertarian Marxism ever pushed to the fore. Of course, the reformism and bureaucratism of the Communist Party did not inspire warmth for orthodox Marxism or for orthodox methods of organizing. So anarchism faced no serious competition in the student movement.

The other "pole" of the 22nd of March Movement sees limits to hardline anarchism. It worked for a few days in May, but at other times people may not be quite so ready to take to the streets. What tactics will apply to the long slow work of preparing people for sustained revolutionary action? The people who ask these questions are distinguished from the first "pole" by a greater awareness of the limitations of direct action and by a lesser degree of distrust of organization and theory. They argue that to pose the problem of organization separate from that of action is to ask the question wrongly. Organization must grow out of action and reflect the needs of action. Strategy, planning over fairly long periods, coordination, all may be necessary, and organization may be necessary to accomplish them. But organization can never be an end in itself, nor can theory or planning or coordinating be ends in themselves. Organization must be the embodiment of the activity and the will and the needs of those who act. It must grow out of those needs, and be completely fluid, changing with the shape of the needs. Within these bounds, they not only do not oppose organization of the struggle; they desire it. But the heart and brains of any organization must be in its activists and its local action committees, not in any central committee.

As for direct action, they agree with the "hard" anarchists

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that "objective conditions" are not something you wait for, but are something you try to create through action. However, they do not expect that propitious conditions can be generated out of nothing. There are situations in which confrontation will not draw the masses out in support of you, when the will and action of a few conscious revolutionaries will not suffice to create a revolutionary situation.

All this analysis — talk of "poles" and "tendencies" — sounds pedantic and false when we remember what it was like to be in Paris. It is hard to convey the hilarious exuberance and unity which we sensed there. You couldn't walk down the Boulevard St. Michel, hang around the occupied buildings, or talk to a veteran of the barricades without developing a severe contact high. Written on the wall: "Distrust sad people. *La révolution, c'est la joie!*" So much for the dead serious *groupusculites* of "La Chinoise." This sense of release, of joy in the revolution, extended to all the major tendencies in *22 Mars*. There is reason to believe that this style was germinating in the March 22nd Movement well before May. We know, for example, that Cohn-Bendit and others at Nanterre had read, beside Bakunin and Marx, a pamphlet of the International Situationists proclaiming true proletarian revolution to be *une fête*. "Play is the ultimate rationale of this *fête*, to live outside of dead time and to act without obstacles. . . ."

How much of this spirit was shared by workers we can only guess. Certainly the kind of student-worker contacts that developed are unique to France. Students did not go out to "organize" workers around workers' issues. Instead, students pursued their own demands, setting the example of unabashed, self-interested militancy. Exemplary action was soon followed by common action. In mid-May many young workers fought on the barricades with the students. Then at places like the Renault factory at Flins they learned that the students would come out and fight for them, too. During the latter part of May and June, the students aided the striking workers in many other ways. They went out to the factories to assist the picket lines. They organized peasants to provide food for the strikers in exchange for services (important in France where unions

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have no strike funds). In return, thousands of workers came to the occupied universities, to talk both with students and with other workers. For many workers it was their first chance to talk with workers from other parts of their own industry without the mediation of the unions.

We in the United States are used to talking about neo-capitalism or advanced state monopoly capitalism as a phenomenon of North America and Western Europe. This formulation has allowed us to cover up the great differences between the various countries. The European economies are, in general, not as advanced as that of the United States, and their working classes are correspondingly less effectively "integrated" into the system than is the American industrial working class. In France, particularly, workers are still not able to participate fully in the general French rush toward consumerism. French employers range from feudally paternalistic to outright reactionary in their relations with their employees, both in the factory and through the government apparatus. Partly for these reasons, the massive Communist Party has been able to create and maintain a strong sense of class consciousness among workers. (We say this even though the same party, through its electoral and trade union activities, operates as a strong integrating force.) As a result, the problem in France is less that of bringing class consciousness to the workers than it is of developing forms of struggle that utilize that class consciousness and that mold it into a revolutionary consciousness. In this context, even bread-and-butter issues such as wages, for which many American neo-capitalist theorists have contempt, are potentially revolutionary issues.

We cannot conclude, with so many Americans on the Left, that "France demonstrates the possibility of revolution in advanced capitalist countries." May demonstrated the possibility of revolution in *France*. But as Dany Cohn-Bendit said, "The question of whether there can still be revolutions in advanced capitalist countries doesn't really interest me." The lesson of the French activists is that it is up to us to *create* the possibility of revolutionary change *here*.

The greatest tribute we can pay to the French revolu-

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tionaries of 1968 is not mindless imitation of their tactics. It is to study their movement carefully to further our knowledge of the dynamics of the revolutionary process, and to take to heart their deep understanding of the dynamics of revolutionary organization.

When we were in the then-occupied faculty of sciences of the University of Paris, we met a student who was planning to come to the United States this fall. In response to our urging him to talk to United States student audiences during his trip, he joked; "But what can the Columbia students learn from me? In New York, the streets are paved with asphalt, not cobblestones." Of course, we have a lot to learn; so do they. *What* we have to learn depends on an assessment of the relative strengths of the United States and the European movements in various areas. The major difference between Europe and the United States is that the European movements (in France, Italy, and Germany) are truly *mass student* movements, with a significant concentration on purely university issues — from exams to course content. Where mass student movements have developed (if only sporadically) in the United States, at Berkeley and at Columbia, the impetus came from off-campus issues; civil rights, Vietnam, ghetto oppression. Almost from the start, we have dealt with the university as a well-integrated element of the system, not as a sub-system. Our movements, SNCC and SDS, funnel people out of academia and into other arenas of action.

The reasons for the European emphasis on intra-university issues are not hard to discover. From Rome to Berlin, the average student leads a more degrading daily life, to prepare for a far less certain future, than his American counterpart. Again and again we were told, "The university is a feudal institution." The university structure is rigidly hierarchical; its content is blatantly anachronistic. Students are doing well to get their masters' degrees at 25 or 26, and they are still virtually unemployable. In France and Germany, where the demands of industry for trained personnel have outstripped the university's supply, government plans to "reform" the uni-

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versity antedated the growth of student movements. Now reforms may be too late, for mass discontent with the university is developing into mass rejection of the functions of the university in a capitalist society. Thus in Europe, the university is a particularly crisis-prone institution because its traditional function of producing an unskilled aristocracy is wholly irrelevant to the needs of expanding industry.

In contrast, the United States university has always been the willing handmaid of United States industry. The university also satisfies the expectations of most students, who can look ahead to an unbroken trajectory: from campus to industry, public service, etc. Still, the American university is haunted by its pre-American predecessors. While it does a good job of teaching skills suitable for unquestioning workers, it persists in exposing us to culture (liberal arts, etc.) suitable to enlightened aristocrats. In Chemistry we can learn how to make napalm; in Civics we can read the prayers of St. Francis. The irrationality of the European university is "external," and appears only when you consider it in the context of advancing industrialization. But the United States university is so thoroughly integrated with its setting that its irrationality is internal and reflects an ambivalence in the needs of industry itself. That is, as American capitalism comes to rely increasingly on innovations, it requires fewer and fewer unthinking technicians and more "mavericks." (Read the want ads in *Scientific American.*) The risk is obvious: the ability to reason and innovate may be difficult to channel. The internal contradiction of the United States university may still be sub-clinical, but it's there.

The immediate result of the trans-Atlantic difference on issue-emphasis is (to oversimplify): We tend to be stronger on off-campus organizing; they are stronger in student organizing. France is no exception. French students do not claim to have organized the workers' rebellion of May; they merely provided an example. French workers are sufficiently un-integrated that an example sufficed (for a few glorious days). Out of the rebellion came a smattering of worker-student contacts, which will take serious organizing to maintain and develop. So far, the European forte has been organizing ordinary students on stu-

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dent issues and going on from student issues to anti-capitalist struggle. (For the record, we should add that they have also demonstrated fantastic proficiency in street fighting, which the brothers in Berkeley might study more carefully.) Theoretical justifications for the concentration on students vary from the Italian view of students as simply an avant garde in the workers' struggle, to the German view of students as a potentially revolutionary stratum in their own right. The latter emphasis is probably more sensible for the United States, where 50 percent of the high school graduates go on to college, and where students are more truly "pre-workers." In fact, maybe we should begin thinking of students (despite their rapid turnover in the United States) as a marginal group capable of taking up common struggle with other marginal groups like blacks and poor people generally.

Thinking of students as a potentially revolutionary stratum means thinking in terms of organizing them *en masse*. In community organizing we usually assume that people can be moved through self-interest issues and direct action to an understanding of the oppressive nature of the system as a whole. We assume that there exist open-ended demands which, even if met, lead on to further demands and ultimately to challenging the whole system. Can we apply this strategy to the academic community? For instance, exams might be a particularly fertile issue, since exams not only terrorize students, but are also the mechanism by which the system assigns price tags (grades) to its most valuable workers. Exams, in themselves, represent the essentials of the capitalist university. If we attempt to build an American mass student movement, we should draw on the Nanterre experience with classroom provo tactics, the German experience with a critical university, the Italian experience in the uses of occupied buildings, etc. The point is not to "restructure" the university, but as the Germans would say, "to give it a new function": that of producing masses—not just cadres—of young revolutionaries.

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SOME NOTES ON THE CULTURE OF IMPERIALISM

BY IRWIN SILBER

We live in a time when world change on a heroic scale is taking place. Half a millennium of world history is drawing to an inexorable climax. The capitalist era is coming to an end. Born by the light of the Renaissance to the accompaniment of a Bach fugue, its portrait painted by Rembrandt, its birth announced by Shakespeare and Cervantes—today capitalism is dying. And now its accompaniment is in the click of a hundred million television sets and the prophetic doom songs of the Beatles.

Like all previous systems, the capitalist system does not choose to leave the stage of history peacefully. Quite the contrary. In its death agonies it poisons and destroys and kills with all the pent-up desperation of the doomed. The masters of imperialism who once extended their powers all over the surface of the earth now sense the inevitability of their extinction.

But in the midst of death there is always life. The new man has already made his appearance on the stage of history. At this moment, he is fighting in the streets of Danang. The time of socialism and the liberation of peoples is here. And it is now the beautiful and urgent and historical role of the most exploited and most oppressed of this planet to usher in the next millennium—the new age which will see man truly become the master of his destiny. It is from this struggle, rooted in the dreams and the heritage of "the wretched of the earth," that a new culture and a new art will emerge.

Much has been written and said about imperialism's "cultural penetration" of the underdeveloped world. The significance of this in the national liberation struggles has been brilliantly

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This is a slightly abbreviated version of a paper delivered by the author at the Cultural Congress of Havana in January, 1968. Irwin Silber, former editor of *Sing Out* and author of several books on folk music, is currently on the staff of the *Guardian*.

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analyzed by Fanon and others. But it is important—it is crucial—to examine the nature of life and culture at this juncture of history in the imperialist countries themselves—and most particularly, in the heart of the world imperialist structure, the United States of America. In the colonial and neo-colonial world, among the people of the secondary capitalist powers, even in the socialist countries, there are deep-rooted illusions concerning life in the imperialist world. These illusions help to foster attempts to imitate the superficial and stultifying culture of imperialism. But the liberation of a people demands the rejection of the living death of the art, the culture, the ideology of the dying past and the creation of a new expression which grows out of the needs and traditions of those who represent the future and who are now in the process of coming to power throughout the world.

For these reasons, it is important to tear away the mask and to tell the truth about the culture of imperialism. For not only is the imperialist structure being hastened to its inevitable end by the growing strength and militancy of the peoples of the planet. It is also dying, slowly and surely, of auto-intoxication, poisoned on its own unexpelled feces, choking on the polluted fumes of a rancid morality.

The immoral aggression in Vietnam has accelerated the process of dehumanization in the United States until it is now almost complete. The plastic civilization of the North American ruling class has triumphed and visited upon its own people an intellectual and moral genocide so penetrating and so profound that it has poisoned the entire structure of social and human relationships in the United States. And it is the culture of imperialism itself that documents the ultimate degradation of life in America today.

The cardboard arts of television, the Hollywood films and the Broadway stage are founded on the stupid, the superficial, and the inane. They abound in the moral precepts of racism, projecting both subtly and directly that white America is the center of the universe and the deserving chosen of some Almighty (although He might be dead, presumably no longer necessary in a world which enjoys the presence of Lyndon B.

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Johnson). The mass arts in America are steeped in a contempt for life and a cynical belief that all culture, all expression, all ideas are merely commodities in the great market place of capitalist reality.

Our films have lost whatever small capacity they may have once had for social truth. The "best" of them wallow in pretentiousness ("A Man for All Seasons," "Guess Who's Coming to Dinner") or feed the illusion of social reality with pseudo-rebellions ("The Graduate"). And while there are occasional films of worth produced, the great mass product of the silver screen reflects the intellectual and spiritual barrenness of American life. Add to this the totally debased world encased in the television tube—the schizophrenic nightmare of daytime housewife soap opera, bloated comedians, puerile games of skill and "intellect," one-dimensional adventure stories, and tight-assed news commentators, the whole enlivened only by the unscrupulous psychological manipulation of the great big consumer maw —and one understands why Dante's hell is preferable to a lifetime imprisoned in America's mass media.

And laughter? Our humor is the macabre humor of "MacBird" and the chilling reality of Feiffer. (Aren't the logical non-sequiturs of Charley Brown just another side of our madness?) We have made laughter our defense and our weapon and our device for self-pity.

For tens of millions of Americans, the technology of capitalism has become, in fact, a monster which now dominates the very texture of their lives. The victory of this anti-human technology has produced a people frightened by the world, unsure of their own worth, anxiously buying emotional security through the accumulation of material objects. Their own culture has impressed on them that unless their physical appearance and their values match those of the unreal world of the television commercial and the magazine advertisement, they are incomplete people. The owners and operators of the mass media have mastered the techniques of personality manipulation and motivation. They utilize all the weapons of psychological warfare —fear, distrust, self-flagellation, guilt—for the purpose of selling their products and making profits. And now the American peo-

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ple have become prisoners in their own land. That they are unaware of their imprisonment or the creeping horror which is engulfing them is itself part of the process which has dulled their minds and senses to the world they live in.

In point of fact, the only significant artistic work being created in the United States today are works of a negative and destructive character. America has lost its capacity to produce an art of affirmation. The heritage of Whitman and Sandburg is dead. The American Dream has become a nightmare. Today, the best writers in the theater, the most creative musicians and singers, the most profound artists and painters, have turned their talents to exposing the mockery of life in the heart of the "free world."

Let us make no mistake about it. Unlike the 50's, there is an eruption in the arts in America today. It is a violent eruption, a bursting cry of despair or a brutal sneer of cynicism. In the theater, Albee strips away the hypocritical veneer and shows the disease and corruption that festers just below the surface. And we know—how well we know—that anything less is trivia. Our painters mock us (and themselves) with cans of soup, while our poets heighten the pain of our wounds with their tears of despair and anger.

Our new critics polemicize against interpretation, while the cult of style reigns supreme. (When the content ultimately works to serve the purposes of the system, is it surprising that we should reject content?) Art is its own reason for being in this macabre world of the anti-intellect; the artistic expression has become the purpose of art. We don't care what the artist has to say. We prefer him not to say anything too definite anyway. Just let him say it well, imaginatively, inventively. The "hip" style has prevailed and created a new set of culture heroes, admired and imitated for their cool. In a marvelous demonstration of the negation of the negation, the hero has become anti-hero has become hero—for only the heroic anti-hero can see through the shame of America's culture values and cynically play the game without becoming emotionally involved. The medium is the message—and there is no message. (Garcia waits no longer. He is writing his own message that does not wait on

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any one, least of all his enemy or those who live in the enemy camp.)

And the young, robbed of their rights to discover and explore the beauties of life, seek "love" with a compelling desperation that has become a betrayal of human dignity. A new "underground," based in a pseudo-existential life style of drugs, sex, and the rock music of the Beatles and Bob Dylan (and their successors, heirs and assigns) has taken root among the young on a massive scale. Betrayed by words, they reject meaning and tell us, in a music whose sound overwhelms the poetry, don't look for meaning in what we say.

And all this—the alienated cry of anguish, this great torrent of revulsion against the artificiality and dehumanization of life has been cynically taken over by the mass media and fed back to the people—at a profit. For the North American capitalist is a greedy beast, a gluttonous animal who attempts to merchandise the very mirror which reveals his ugliness to the world.

As yet, there is no real revolutionary art in the United States. For a revolutionary art requires a revolutionary base —and this does not yet exist. It comes closest to realization among the most oppressed sections of the black population in the ghettos, and among the revolutionary black artists such as LeRoi Jones, Archie Shepp, Ishmael Reed, Julius Lester, and others, there is the beginning of a powerful force. Among the white intellectuals, while there is much talk of revolution and revolutionary art, nothing is produced which is capable of moving and inspiring a corrupted and demoralized people towards a position of genuine revolutionary struggle.

There are beginnings. Guerrilla theater, street-corner poetry, anti-draft songs. But everything depends on the development of a revolutionary base capable of inspiring and supporting a genuine alternative culture.

It is time for the entire world to learn that the United States of America, the ultimate triumph of "Western ideals," the final "sanctuary of the free world," the core of world imperialism, is a land of deep unhappiness today. The wealth and the material satisfactions have not brought personal fulfillment or happiness to the people of North America. They have brought

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instead only opiates to cover up the pain of loneliness and self-doubt.

And the arts—the glittering, flamboyant, high-pressured, meaningless creative arts of the United States—have become terribly sad reflections of a living death and, at the same time, the terrifying overture to imperialism's final funeral hymn.

There are not two nations. The independent nation of South Vietnam is a fiction invented by the U.S. Department of State. . . . It was not agreed at in Geneva and Gen. Bedell Smith did not take exception to it . . . speaking in the name of the United States. There was to be a cease-fire. The Communists agreed to it. There were to be free elections in 1956. Those elections weren't held because the United States of America didn't permit them to be held. We're supposed to be in favor of free elections. We weren't for them then. Why? Read Eisenhower's memoirs. He says that Ho Chi Minh would have won by 80 percent . . . 80 percent of the votes. That's why we were against it.

—*David Schoenbrun*

We must protect our national honor. Our national honor involves getting out of North Vietnam, not staying in.

We are told that we must win the hearts and minds of the Vietnamese people. . . . We do that by dropping napalm down their necks. We are told that we must support our boys in Vietnam. This is something we all want to do. If you would take a poll of our boys in Vietnam, I'm sure that you would find they would be rather supported at home than in Vietnam.

—*Rear Admiral Arnold E. True*

I hate this shallow Americanism which hopes to get rich by credit, to get knowledge by raps on midnight tables, to learn the economy of the mind by phrenology, or skill without study, or mastery without apprenticeship.

—*Ralph Waldo Emerson*

To hang me for cutting a dock laborer's throat after making much of me for leaving him to starve when I do not happen to have a ship for him to unload is idiotic; for as he does far less mischief with his throat cut than when he is starving, a rational society would esteem the cutthroat more highly than the capitalist.

—*George Bernard Shaw*

Commerce, n. A kind of transaction in which A plunders from B the goods of C, and for compensation B picks the pocket of D of money belonging to E.

—*Ambrose Bierce, The Devil's Dictionary*

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WORLD EVENTS

By Scott Nearing

Rough Road to Socialism

It has been my good fortune, during recent years, to visit almost all of the countries in which planning and building socialism is the declared purpose of the central government. I have been in the Soviet Union eight times since 1925. I have visited other socialist countries less frequently but recently. Early in 1968 I was in Albania for the first time and in Rumania, Hungary, and East Germany for the third or fourth time.

As a believer in the mission of socialism to equal, excel, and supplant capitalism, I was anxious to study socialism at work, to chronicle its successes, to analyze and learn from its shortcomings. Like most of my comrades I hoped that socialism would become a dominant force in international affairs as well as in the direction of domestic, political, economic, and cultural life.

After a half century of experience with socialist construction (1917-1968) one thing has become crystal clear. Contrary to the hopes and predictions of its devotees, socialism has not become a monolith. Instead, it has developed the contradictions, factional squabbles, and power struggles that have played so large a role in the history of other reformist and revolutionary movements during recent centuries.

Deviations from the presumed norms of socialism characterized the socialist movement during its unofficial existence prior to October, 1917. Similar deviations and factional struggles continued inside the Soviet Union from 1917 to 1945, when socialist construction was confined to one country. After 1945, as a dozen additional countries launched programs for building socialism, differences increased and deviation from the assumed socialist norm were emphasized and institutionalized. The differences have become so sharp that by the autumn of 1968, it is evident that a socialist norm is little more than a theoretical or logical assumption. There is no socialist infallible pope, nor

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is there any organized body of socialists that can define socialism and prescribe its characteristics.

Under the pressure of historical forces, the labor movement in Southern Europe had taken a syndicalist turn long before the Bolshevik breakthrough in 1917. Syndicalist forces were strong in the south of France. They played a leading role in Spain during the Spanish revolution of 1932. They were uppermost in the Yugoslavia that emerged from the bitter fighting between Partisans and the invading Nazi armies after 1941.

Socialists in Western and Central Europe advocated state control of the economy, with the organized working class playing a leading role in the direction of government policy. Socialists (and anarchists) in Southern Europe advocated direct control by the workers of the industries in which they worked. Political socialists favored the organization of society along geographical lines, paralleling existing state boundaries. Syndicalists urged social organization along occupational lines, with the work place rather than the dwelling place as the determining factor.

Syndicalism played a minor role in the Russian Revolution of 1917. It was the outstanding force in the Yugoslavia that emerged from the 1939-1945 war. Arguments between political socialists and syndicalists had wracked the European socialist movement for three generations. The Soviet Union became the official leader of the political socialists. At the same time Yugoslavia spoke up for the syndicalists. This conflict in socialist ranks led to the 1948 open break between the Soviet government and Yugoslavia, and a subsequent cold war with economic and political sanctions imposed by the Soviet Union.

Political socialism has one notable advantage over syndicalism. It uses established political forms—a Rumanian government, a Polish government, a Czech government—pouring new wine into old bottles. The syndicalists are at the disadvantage of having to make new bottles before they can pour in the new wine. Political organization of European society is based on a long tradition. Syndicalist organization is an innovation. In Europe's socialist movement the two forms have existed side by

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side for two decades, co-existing, but with a great deal of friction.

Eight European socialist countries following the lines of political socialism have also co-existed, at times harmoniously, at times acrimoniously. Relations between Albania and the Soviet Union have been strained near to the breaking point.

Co-existence among the eight European countries developing political socialism has been limited by the exigencies of national sovereignty. Sovereignty presupposes self-determination. The political socialist states of Europe guard their sovereignty jealously. They make treaties and enter economic agreements, but always as sovereign states. There is no delegation of power to a central authority. No federation or no confederation has been established. Each one of the socialist states, at least in theory, is free to go its own way.

Practically, however, there are drastic limitations. In population, productivity, wealth, and armament, the Soviet Union towers above the other seven and is capable of limiting or crippling their sovereignty.

The Cold War launched in 1946 imposed drastic limitations on the sovereignty of the eight lesser political socialist states in Europe. Twice the Soviet Union had been massively invaded: the first time in 1919-1921, the second time in 1941. After the War of 1914-1918 the Austro-Hungarian Empire was dismembered and set up as a group of independent states in East Europe under the tutelage of Britain and France. This *cordon sanitaire* was designed to keep the Bolsheviks out of Central and Western Europe. After 1945 the same border states, under Soviet tutelage, were set up and maintained by the Soviet Union to shield Russia against a third invasion from the West. The decision to maintain a *cordon sanitaire* in reverse involved the Soviet in supervision of the entire area and imposed a drastic and rankling limitation on the sovereignty of the lesser socialist states of Europe.

Instead of a voluntary federation of European socialist states, with a central authority exercising delegated powers, there was one big rich powerful European socialist state making decisions in the realm of Cold War power politics and enforcing them (as in 1956 in Hungary) by armed force. After 1945

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there was at no time a European Communist Party, but nine separate communist parties, each directing affairs in a political state, eight of them subject to the power-political decisions of the Soviet Union and each jealously asserting and safeguarding its own self-determined rights.

Created and tested during the 1950's, this cluster of European socialist states began to break up during the 1960's. Rumania picked its own pattern of economic relations with fellow socialist states and with opposing capitalist states. Poland, Hungary, and East Germany launched programs of economic and social reform. Czechoslovakia, in the summer of 1968, announced a reform program so extreme as to lead orthodox Communists to charge the Czech Communist Party with abandoning socialism. These moves further divided a European socialist movement that was already split by ideological controversies and sovereign political boundaries.

Meanwhile, the 1949 success of the Chinese Liberation Armies and the establishment of socialist governments in North Korea, Outer Mongolia, and North Vietnam so altered the numerical balance of socialism that the majority of peoples living in socialist countries was shifted from Europe to Asia. Of the billion population inhabiting socialist countries in 1968, at least three quarters live in Asia, leaving one quarter in Europe, the Americas, and Africa.

Until late in the 1950's Soviet leadership of the world socialist-communist movement was taken as a matter of course. Only after China's Great Leap in 1958, with subsequent developments leading to the Proletarian Cultural Revolution in 1965, was Soviet world leadership directly challenged and a rival organization of Maoist parties and groups set up.

The confrontations and controversies between European socialist parties and states were overshadowed by this massive confrontation of European socialism (divided by ideological differences and political boundaries) and Asian socialism with one leader, Mao Tse-tung, one doctrine, Mao's teachings, and the crusading vigor and enthusiasm of the Chinese people.

It is a gross understatement to say that the planetary socialist movement is not a monolith in 1968. It never was a

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monolith even in its unofficial era, before 1917. Socialist governments today in a dozen socialist countries and socialist-communist parties in virtually every developed or developing country of the world are crisscrossed and divided by ideological differences, factional controversies and power struggles, culminating in the 1960-1968 conflict between the Communist Parties of the two largest and most influential countries dedicated to the building of socialism.

Areas of Socialist Agreement

Despite ideological controversies and conflicts regarding socialist practice, the development in all of the socialist countries has showed striking similarities.*

(1) All socialist countries have established republics with representative governments closely patterned along lines laid down by the 19th-century bourgeois republics. (Yugoslavia may claim to be an exception to this statement, and as yet no set pattern has emerged from the Chinese Cultural Revolution.)

(2) All have written constitutions dedicated to the establishment of socialism-communism, providing for political, economic, and social institutions and elaborate bills of economic and civil rights.

(3) All socialist countries have undertaken to end exploitation of man by man, abolish poverty, and in the long run distribute income in accordance with need.

(4) All socialist countries have proposed to follow the utilitarian sequence of 19th-century bourgeois society: industrialize, specialize, urbanize.

(5) In order to carry the program into effect, each socialist country has introduced a free educational program aimed to abolish illiteracy, to encourage full-time and part-time study, and to provide professional scientific and technical skills adequate to plan, organize, and administer a socialist society. Women and men take part in this program as teachers and learners on a completely equal footing. After one generation, as a result of this educational program, each socialist country is staffed with

* See *Socialism in Practice*, published by New Century Publishers in 1962, for a comparison of socialist practice among the socialist countries of Europe.

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native professional, scientific, and technical personnel.

(6) After a generation of this training, all socialist countries have provided or are providing themselves with a technological intelligentsia similar to that which developed in Western bourgeois countries in the course of the revolution in science and technology. This intelligentsia makes and implements policy in bourgeois society; it is doing the same thing in socialist countries.

(7) Increasingly, in bourgeois countries, the educational apparatus has broadened the social base from which the technological intelligentsia is drawn. Socialist countries are following the same course, with the avowed purpose of replacing a narrow class culture by a broad mass culture, ending with the abolition of all class distinctions.

(8) This sequence in bourgeois society has led from scarcity to affluence. Socialist countries propose to follow it to an abundance of goods and services distributed to all, at first in accordance with work done, and when abundance is firmly assured, in accordance with need.

Is this sequence what Mao Tse-tung calls "the capitalist road"? Or is it the logical course of cause and effect, from capitalism, through socialism, to communism? Given the revolution in the means of production on which Marx, Engels, and Lenin laid such great emphasis, is there any other road for socialists of this generation to follow? If they follow it, prudently, resolutely, and with a reasonable degree of solidarity, will it not lead mankind from an outdated, discredited capitalism to an alternative, socialist world order?

The road to socialism has proved to be arduous and rough in spots. But socialist construction has introduced many new elements into 20th-century human society. Among these, perhaps the most important is a realization that the conscious self-improvement of human society is opening up vast opportunities to utilize nature and raise levels of human well-being.

A free government, with an uncontrolled power of military conscription, is a solecism, at once the most ridiculous and abominable that ever entered into the head of man.

—*Daniel Webster, December 9, 1814*

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BOOKS

CLASS STRUGGLE IN AFRICA

BY RICHARD MORROCK

Not Yet Uhuru; An Autobiography, by Oginga Odinga. Hill and Wang, New York, 1967; $7.50.

One of the more curious phenomena of our time has been the co-optation of African nationalism by the imperialists in a number of countries where, only a few short years ago, they appeared so eager to contain or destroy it. Ghana, which once seemed to be headed toward full membership in the socialist camp, is now, after the overthrow of the unpopular Nkrumah regime, a secure bastion of the same neo-colonialism which its former President had often promised to chase out of Africa. The Algerian FLN, which mobilized the Moslem masses in a prolonged and bloody struggle against the French, has now been reduced to a fig-leaf to hide the naked militarist repression of Colonel Boumedienne, the "revolutionary" who protects French economic interests while imprisoning the Left.

Perhaps the most unexpected of all has been the conversion to what one might describe as "anti-anti-imperialism" by two of the foremost leaders of the independence movement in East Africa —Jomo Kenyatta of Kenya, and Dr. Hastings Kamuzu Banda of Malawi (the former Nyasaland). One can easily understand the fact that yesterday's radicals frequently become today's conservatives; this has happened often enough in the United States. But what is so surprising is the extreme haste with which Kenyatta and Banda have embraced the ideological pretensions of their former enemies. Kenya, after all, obtained its independence only in December, 1963, while Nyasaland became Malawi in mid-1964.

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* Richard Morrock is a frequent contributor to MONTHLY REVIEW.

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One might have thought, furthermore, that these two nations in particular would have been more radical, especially in contrast to neighboring Uganda and Tanzania. Both Kenya and Malawi freed themselves from colonialism only in the face of violent opposition from local white settlers. Yet it is Uganda, where the transition to independence was relatively peaceful, that now follows a truly non-aligned foreign policy, while Tanzania, which had little in the way of a white settler problem, is the most radical state in East Africa today.

Why such unlikely developments in this part of the world? In his autobiographical account, Kenya's former Vice-President, Oginga Odinga, provides us with at least part of the answer.

Most of Odinga's autobiography is taken up with the narrative of his early life in Nyanza province—home of the large Luo tribe—his education, his entry into politics, and his activities on behalf of the rusticated Jomo Kenyatta during the "Mau-Mau" crisis, when Odinga was one of the elected African members of the colonial legislative council. He also covers in detail the period leading up to *uhuru* (independence), when the British were playing off the minority Kenya African Democratic Union (KADU) against the larger and more nationalistic Kenya African National Union (KANU), and trying to prevent the emergence of a united Kenyan nation by fostering provincial, ethnic, and tribal separatism. For our purposes, the most important part of the book is the last chapter, "Obstacles to *Uhuru*," in which the author relates the events of the post-independence period during which he was forced out of the government and KANU. He subsequently founded the opposition Kenya People's Union (KPU), the left-wing party which he heads today.

In the light of Odinga's account, it seems that the African nationalist movement in Kenya fell victim to parliamentarianism —the notion that the advancement of the general welfare depends upon the leaders of the popular movements working within the system handed down by the former colonial power. This philosophy was encouraged by the British in all of their African colonies, and by the French in all of theirs outside of North Africa. The Portuguese, on the other hand, have forbidden all opposition political activities in their "overseas provinces," leaving the nationalist movements no course except armed struggle. In the Congo, the period of limited self-government was extremely brief; the African militants there were never co-opted, and the imperialists

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were eventually forced to take the "humanitarian" measure of crushing the nationalist movement with an army of white mercenaries.

In French and British Africa, parliamentarianism has had several long-range effects, which help to explain much of what has transpired since the beginning of this decade.

First of all, the process of decolonization through electoral means creates a gap between the African political leadership on one hand and the armed forces and administrative services on the other. Theoretically, it is the elected politicians who hold power, even during the transitional period just before independence. But in reality, ultimate power is held—in Africa, as everywhere—by those who control the armed forces. The British, in Kenya, Malawi, Ghana, and elsewhere, took care to ensure that the armies and police forces remained under white control not only during the transitional period but even in the first years following independence; they also made sure that these institutions were kept free of "political"—i.e. nationalist—influence. Thus, they calculated, even if radical politicians carried the field on election day, the threat or actuality of a coup d'état would always suffice to keep the ex-colony in line.

The same thing holds true for the civil service, in which "expatriates" (a euphemism for white civil servants who stay on after independence) remain in important positions regardless of which African political faction acquires a majority in parliament. "The civil service resists change, even sabotages change," says Odinga. (p. 247) "The ideal policy effected in Guinea where the party network of organizers moved in to take over the administration was not easy to operate in Kenya where independence was played out in slow stages, managed by the British. . . ." He gives the example of how an associate of his, the former Minister of Information, Achieng Oneko, was attacked by innuendo over the Voice of Kenya radio—which came under Oneko's own cabinet ministry, and which had been nationalized by the Kenya government at Oneko's insistence! (p. 301)

In Malawi, where a bitter clash broke out shortly after independence between the President and several of his cabinet ministers, the crucial role in maintaining the President in power was played by whites in the army, police, and civil service. From then on, Dr. Banda was completely under the thumb of the British. (See Andrew Ross, "White Africa's Black Ally," *New Left Review,* No. 45.)

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Aside from separating the African nationalist leaders from the real centers of power, reliance on parliamentary means also separated them from their mass constituencies. Leaders who must spend most of their time in the capital city on legislative business can only remain in touch with their followers by means of the mass media. The newspapers, of course, are largely owned by "expatriates." Anti-imperialists such as Odinga can be sure of getting a bad press.

Election campaigns need to be financed. Before the period of self-government, the finances of such parties as KANU and the Malawi Congress Party came from members' dues. Both of these parties had hundreds of thousands of committed followers and while few of them could afford more than token contributions, the sums collected nevertheless managed to add up, considering the number of contributions involved. However, after the apparent victories over the British had been won, these same followers stopped giving money to their parties, which, as far as they were concerned, had already served their purpose. The nationalist parties, being thus threatened with bankruptcy, came to depend upon outside sources for their finances. Odinga describes a KANU party conference in March, 1966, which, he relates:

> took on the pattern of a closely stage-managed American-type political convention. The delegates were accommodated in hotels (who paid the bills?), lavishly entertained . . . and were driven in hired transport to the conference sessions which were held about 18 miles from where they were accommodated. Before the Limuru Conference, KANU's bank account was overdrawn, yet someone paid these bills. (p. 299)

As the nationalist politicians obtained jobs in the *uhuru* governments, they suddenly gained access to the luxuries which were previously available only to the white settlers. As Odinga points out, a member of parliament in Kenya will earn more in a year than a poor peasant will earn in his whole life. Unwilling to sacrifice their new comforts for the sake of economic development, these politicians come to identify their interests with those of the remaining white settlers, and become "almost as remote from the mass of the people as were the former colonial administrators." (p. 303) In Kenya, many members of this "new class" of African leaders managed to acquire large landed estates which had previously belonged to white settlers who, being unwilling to live under an African government, had left the country at the time of independence.

But perhaps the greatest shortcoming of the African nationalist

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movements is one which Odinga does not deal with. This is the fact that these movements attempted to combat imperialism without the benefit of an ideology of class struggle. This weakness, to be sure, had been imposed by necessity: all Africans, regardless of class, felt it obligatory during the struggle for independence to unite against the common enemy. The stronger the enemy, the greater was the need for unity—and in Kenya and Malawi, the enemy was particularly strong. Says Odinga:

> We regarded the *uhuru* period as a culmination of the struggle for independence, when national mobilization was needed for a set of political and economic *uhuru* aims—expressed as "African Socialism"—to which all forces and economic groups in the country would subjugate their efforts. (p. 269)

Pat Sloan, an Englishman who taught at Nkrumah's ideological institute prior to the 1966 coup, put forth a similar formulation in an article ("Ghana Without Illusion," *Political Affairs*, October, 1966) intended as a rebuttal to Fitch and Oppenheimer's *Ghana: End of an Illusion*, published that summer as a double issue of MONTHLY REVIEW. Sloan says that the Ghanaian Convention People's Party

> had to *reconcile* all social strata from chiefs to unskilled illiterate laborers, from rich farmers and Ghanaian capitalists to industrial and farm workers. The policy of the Party was one of *unity* against imperialism and neo-colonialism; positive action consisted in weeding out at each stage those influences that obstructed the further development towards socialism (obviously this weeding out should have been much faster in the military and police sectors of the state apparatus) while at the same time preserving national unity to the greatest extent.

The trouble with this sort of "national unity" was that the leadership remained in the hands of the more conservative social strata—chiefs, rich farmers, businessmen—and the vacillating petty bourgeoisie. It never devolved to the workers and peasants, despite all the talk about "African Socialism." The conditions of these two classes remain similar to what they were during the colonial period.

Compare the independence movements in Ghana and Kenya with that in Vietnam. National unity was just as essential for the Vietnamese in their struggle against the French, and now against the Americans, as it was for the Ghanaians and Kenyans. But the Vietnamese Communists never lost sight of the need to mobilize the peasants and workers around their class interests, and to keep both the political leadership and the military leadership under

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Communist control. After 1964, there were still people in the Viet Minh who opposed any further advance toward socialism, but it was they who were "weeded out," not the Left.

One big problem in Kenya right now is that Odinga's KPU does not differ basically in its structure or ideology from the compromised KANU party from which it split. Odinga is not a Marxist like Ho Chi-minh, but a radical African nationalist who, for a combination of reasons which do not concern us here, never "sold out" to the West. The program of the KPU demands land reform, a non-aligned foreign policy, further nationalization of industry, and measures to combat severe and growing unemployment—nothing that KANU itself did not advocate before it took office. What guarantee is there that the KPU, should it ever replace its rival through electoral means, would not proceed down the same slippery path? One can even go further, and say that, in the light of recent history, the KPU will never be able to take power in a free election unless the imperialists feel quite sure that it will indeed "sell out" once it takes office.

The task of the Left in Africa seems to be threefold. First, the goal of political independence having been achieved, the bourgeois nationalist ideology should be replaced, on the Left, by revolutionary Marxism. Second, the philosophy of parliamentarianism must be overcome, and the sooner the better; the Left should work within trade unions, peasants' movements, and anti-imperialist solidarity committees, attempting thereby to widen the existing gap between the masses and their pro-imperialist rulers. This can be done by means of education, strikes, and mass demonstrations. Finally, the African Left should develop a suitable strategy of armed struggle, and prepare for the protracted war of liberation that will be needed to free all of Africa from Western domination —in the neo-colonies of East, West, and North Africa, just as much as in the settler-dominated states of the South.

We keep voting for the lesser of two evils, but the evil keeps getting worse and worse. There is nothing more horrible than a liberal government perpetuating a fraud.

—Dick Gregory, New York Times, March 17, 1968

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CORRESPONDENCE

Comments on "Toward An International Strategy"

Please allow me space to comment briefly on the disagreement registered by the MR editors regarding the dual strategy thesis put forward in my article "Toward an International Strategy."* Though I believe this disagreement to be more apparent than real, it points up a certain lack of clarity in the article which must be set straight if further misunderstanding is to be avoided.

According to the editors, I seem to be saying "that because imperialism is quintessentially an international system, those who live in the imperialist metropolis can combat it primarily through action which is directed at weakening the metropolis' ability to oppress and exploit its subordinate empire." While not depreciating action of this kind, the editors argue that "it is even more important that revolutionaries living in the metropolis should devote themselves to making more revolutionaries there with an eye to the eventual building of a mass revolutionary movement in the very heart of the imperialist monster."

The major point I wish to make is that these two statements, rather than reflecting opposed positions, are *entirely consistent* with one another. Before going into this, however, let me comment on two minor points which need clarification.

First, it is not *simply* because imperialism is an international system that metropolitan revolutionaries should engage in anti-imperialist struggle in both "city" and "countryside." It is because of the nature of the contemporary imperialist system and the character of its essential contradictions that such actions should be taken. The progressive resolution of the empire-wide contradiction between metropolitan ruling class and neocolonial masses both heightens and makes possible the resolution of the

* The article in question and our comment on it appeared in the April, 1968, issue of MR.—*Ed.*

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class contradictions within the metropolis. If this is correct, and quite apart from moral arguments, it is in the direct interests of the metropolitan revolutionaries and masses to advance the cause of the anti-imperialist national liberation movements.

Second, the argument that metropolitan revolutionaries should participate in the "rural" anti-imperialist struggle is in no way intended to depreciate the value of various kinds of revolutionary struggle within the metropolis. Strategically, of course, this is not an either/or question, since both types of action can occur simultaneously, involving different sets of people "inside" and "outside." It is, in fact, precisely this two-dimensional strategy for protracted struggle in the "rural" *and* "urban" spheres of the empire which I am advocating. Only on the personal level will individuals have to decide whether, at a given time, they can best serve the revolutionary cause by remaining in the "city" or going out into the "countryside." The stress laid on the need for metropolitan participation in the "rural" sphere stems largely from the fact that at present virtually all of "our" forces are concentrated in the "city."

And now to my major point. The MR editors raise the question of priorities, arguing that it is "more important" for United States revolutionaries to build a mass revolutionary movement in the metropolis than to participate in the struggles to liberate the neo-colonies. My contention is that one can attach "primacy" to metropolitan participation in the "rural" struggle while at the same time agreeing that it is "more important" to build a mass revolutionary movement in the United States. How can this be so? The key to unravelling this apparent contradiction lies in the answer to the question: How do we set about building a mass revolutionary movement in the United States?

Let me begin by elaborating certain underdeveloped points in my article pertaining to metropolitan involvement in the "rural" struggle. First, it should be noted that "those participating *directly* in the armed struggle in the 'countryside,' as technicians, combatants, etc.," would in all likelihood never number more than a small fraction of total metropolitan left forces. For some time, in fact, their number would not exceed the two digit range. Combatants might well include small, technically sophis-

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ticated units trained for highly specialized military missions. Technical personnel, trained in medicine, electronics, engineering, mechanics, hydraulics, and other relevant fields, could assist in the setting-up and running of field hospitals, factories, training centers, etc., within liberated or semi-liberated areas and perform other specialized tasks as the need arose. In addition, revolutionary intellectuals and students, such as economists, linguists, writers, etc., could carry out useful research into problems *dictated by the needs of the armed struggle,* or put their respective skills and resources to work in the areas of publicity, propaganda, and liaison.

Within the United States today vanguard revolutionary elements are to be found primarily among Afro-Americans, university students, and disaffected intellectuals. It is within these sectors of the population that economic oppression and/or alienation are most strongly felt; and it is here that we find the strongest tendencies toward an internationalist orientation. As an "internal colony" of the United States, Afro-Americans will undoubtedly concentrate most of their revolutionary energies on the domestic front—where they should receive wholehearted assistance from white militants. They will, however, also have important contributions to make in the sphere of "rural" struggle.

Nonetheless, it is clear that the vast majority of recruits for the "rural" front must be sought among white students, intellectuals, and young workers. A number of student organizations are now tending in this direction, and it is from this sector that we can expect the vanguard metropolitan elements for the "rural" armed struggle to emerge. Most of the problems in the relationship between black and white militants will be easily resolved once the latter demonstrate that they are willing to run the same revolutionary risks as the former—i.e. once they abandon the built-in advantages and protection afforded by their class and color.

Let us turn now to the question of *indirect participation* in the anti-imperialist struggle and its relation to the building of a mass revolutionary movement within the United States. As previously indicated: "Those participating directly in the armed struggle in the 'countryside' . . . would be assisted by militants

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remaining within the 'city' and responsible for such tasks as recruitment, the provision of funds and material, and propaganda."

The performance of such tasks *in relation to the armed struggle* would both necessitate and facilitate the formation of disciplined revolutionary support groups within the metropolis —the nuclei of a revolutionary mass movement. The tactics of indirect participation in the armed struggle would be clearly linked to sound theory and strategy; each revolutionary action within the metropolis could be understood in terms of its long-range strategic significance and in the context of the broader and protracted anti-imperialist struggle. A viable alternative would be offered to militants, or would-be militants, of both the Old and New Lefts who now say "What can we do?" and then either throw up their hands in despair or yield to spontaneity and free-floating protest tactics which frequently end in demoralization. Total involvement and commitment to a viable long-range strategy tied to armed struggle would provide an answer for the exploited and super-alienated which the current every-so-often demonstration and partial involvement simply cannot produce. Only the dangers and demands of commitment to the armed struggle, the stark necessity for discipline, courage and selflessness, and the irrevocable burning of middle-class bridges, can produce the life-transforming social environment required by those who suffer the alienation and spiritual hunger characteristic of our atomizing metropolitan culture.

Just as the armed struggle in the Sierra Maestra sparked and provided the *raison d'être* for mass mobilization and the organization of revolutionary support groups in Havana and Cuba's other cities, so will participation in the "rural" armed struggle by metropolitan militants foster and facilitate the emergence of revolutionary cadre and support groups in the metropolises of the capitalist world. The material demands and subjective conditions created by our participation in the "rural" armed struggle will, in the months and years ahead, enable a wider and deeper mobilization, organization, and education of the masses and militants of the "city."

In summary, then, far from my suggesting that we abandon

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the "urban" struggle or relinquish our efforts to build a revolutionary movement in the United States, what I am arguing is that by participating directly and indirectly in the "rural" armed struggle we shall help to create the very conditions necessary for broadening and deepening the "urban" struggle and building "a mass revolutionary movement in the very heart of the imperialist monster." Che's moving call is pertinent here:

> And let us develop a true proletarian internationalism, with international proletarian armies; the flag under which we fight shall be the sacred cause of redeeming humanity. To die under the flag of Viet Nam, of Guatemala, of Laos, of Guinea, of Colombia, of Bolivia, of Brazil—to name only a few scenes of today's armed struggle—would be equally glorious and desirable for an American, an Asian, an African, even a European.

J. Michael Dawn

The Price of Utopia

Alexander L. Crosby's May, 1968, article, "The Price of Utopia," raises more questions than it answers, particularly when printed in the MONTHLY REVIEW, "an independent *socialist* publication." (Emphasis added)

It is undoubtedly true that it is now within the grasp of the American capitalist system to create a society where even the most deprived person within the walls of Fortress America can receive the necessary minimum to live well, or at least not to be poor. I will go further than Mr. Crosby and forecast that the American capitalists will create such a society if that is necessary to protect the unity of the base camp from which it exploits the world. That is just the point, however. All of Crosby's utopian program is perfectly feasible under the present capitalist, neocolonial set up; it would simply mean that a relatively small part of the profits from world exploitation would be applied to still the restlessness of the American masses. Indeed, it might mean an increase in exploitation for the rest of the world which would provide the extra funds.

If Crosby meant his program should be accomplished under socialism, his article is dangerously simplistic. Even a socialist America cannot live in comparative luxury while a large part of the world starves, unless it exploits and represses the rest

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of the world. Even if the rest of the world did not destroy such a monstrous state, this socialism of pigs would not be any kind of socialism very long: resting on the lowest human qualities, it would quickly degenerate into one or another variant of feudalism-capitalism.

I raise these points not to attack Mr. Crosby personally (his record does him honor), but because I feel these points need making today.

(1) It is the moral and political responsibility of an economically advanced socialist country to give massive economic assistance to other nations which are less well off. Political common sense (if nothing else) dictates that the primary beneficiaries of such assistance should be other socialist countries.

(2) Socialism means initially that the lowest economic groups will be benefited. But it also means that the tremendous disruption involved in reorganizing a society from top to bottom, inside and out, plus the need for assisting other peoples, plus the end of neo-colonial exploitation, all will leave very large groups in the society no better off or sometimes worse off than under capitalism—at least in the initial period.

(3) It follows from this that a socialist movement and a socialist state cannot be based upon utopian illusions that socialism will be a "Nevsky Prospect." A socialist state with such illusions would avoid its responsibilities of international solidarity and would avoid the thoroughgoing domestic reform required —probably while paying lip service to both.

(4) It also follows that the socialist movement, even after socialism and certainly before, must base itself upon the group which has least to lose and most to gain from the initial stages of socialism. The class struggle (to use an old fashioned but still valid concept) continues after socialism comes to power.

I leave it to others with a more expert and personal knowledge of the foreign scene to apply these points to other countries, and how those countries have met or failed to meet those problems. My point is that American socialists, especially because America is the principal neo-colonialist (imperialist) power can only hinder themselves if they base their socialism on utopian illusions. *Basil R. Pollitt*

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Alexander Crosby Replies

My only complaint against Mr. Pollitt is that he thinks better and farther than I do. There was nothing profound in my article. I wrote the piece out of simple hatred for our aggression in Vietnam, with a hope that it might supply antiwar arguments to non-socialist organizations and individuals concerned about the reforms we can't afford while we are building better body counts.

I agree with Mr. Pollitt, wholeheartedly, that it is the responsibility of a strong socialist state to help other countries, even if it means giving up champagne for Sunday breakfast.

Like the man condemned to death who was granted "freedom of choice" between being hanged and being shot, bourgeois economics is eternally plagued by the problem whether the irrationality of monopoly is better than the anarchy of competition; whether the cumulation of means of destruction is better than unemployment.

—Paul A. Baran—Foreword to 1962 printing of The Political Economy of Growth

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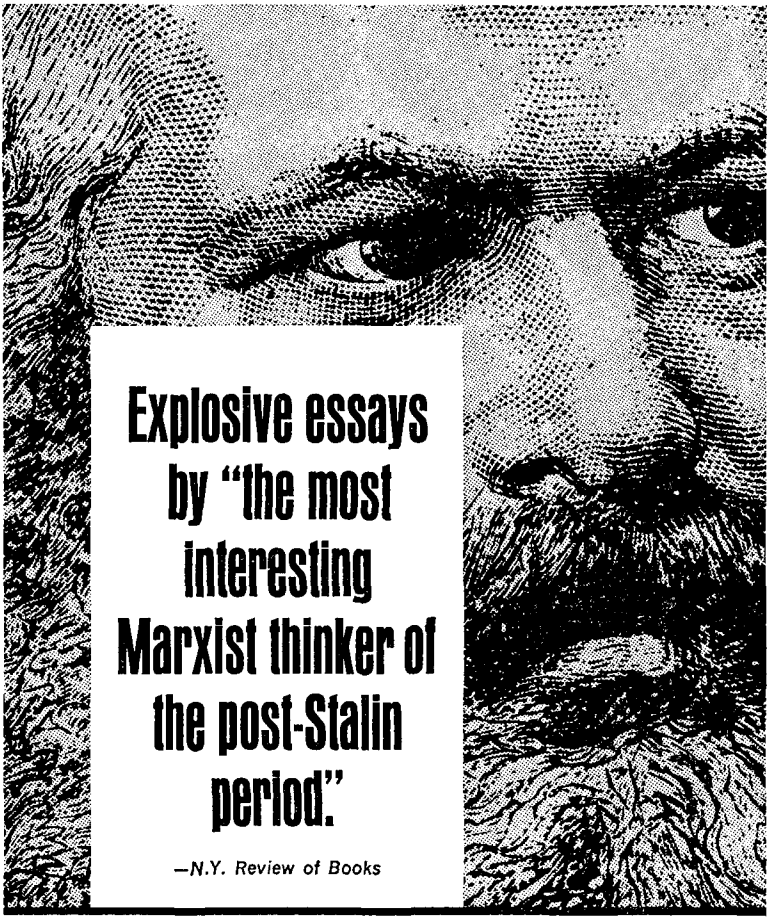

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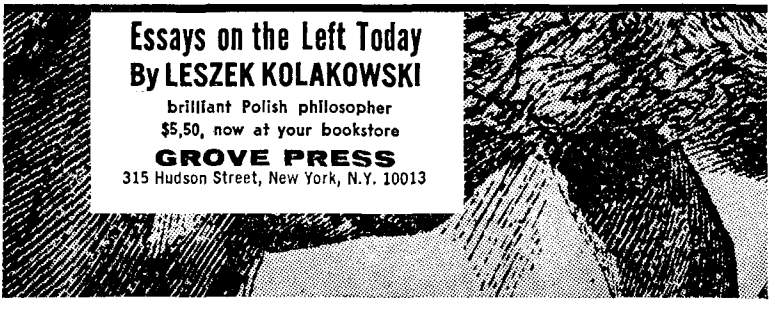
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(The July-August issue of MR plus four additional essays by Gordon Lewis, Juan Bosch, James Petras, and Peter Worsley)	
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We could have included in the above list of books—but didn't because it has already been published—the *Socialist Register 1968*, edited by Ralph Miliband and John Saville. The list price is $6.50 and the price to Associates $3.25. For some of the authors represented, see the ad on the back cover.

Harry Magdoff's article "The Age of Imperialism," the first part of which appeared in the June issue, has grown in the writing and now comprises two further long installments which will be published in the October and November issues. All three parts, together with his earlier article/pamphlet "Economic Aspects of Imperialism," will then be brought out as a book (in both cloth and paper) by MR Press.

In this connection, readers in the New York area will want to know that Harry Magdoff is offering a course during the fall term at the New School for Social Research entitled "The United States in the World Economy." The course will meet for two hours every Tuesday evening beginning October 1. For all further information concerning admission requirements, fees, etc., apply directly to the New School, *not* to MR.

We remind New York area readers that the editors of MR present a monthly half hour program entitled "The Month in Review" over FM station WBAI at 8 P.M. on the last Tuesday of each month (repeated on the following Wednesday at 11:30 A.M.). On the latest program (at the time of writing), we had as guests John Ehrenreich, whose article (with his wife Barbara) on the European student movement begins on p. 14 of this issue, and two German students from Berlin, members of the militant German Socialist Student League (SDS).

We record with sorrow the death on August 5th of Dorothy Kaplan who was on MR's staff in charge of circulation for several years in the early 1960's. A disciplined worker and loyal friend, Dorothy played an important part in helping MR through a difficult period. Those of us who knew and worked with her take this opportunity to express our sympathy to her husband, Irving Kaplan, who has also been a good and helpful friend over the years.

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MR PRESS FALL BOOKS, 1968

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